MEMORIES OF A SCULPTOR'S WIFE

MRS. DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH

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MEMORIES OF A SCULPTOR'S WIFE

Sketch by John C. Johansen

David Chester French

MEMORIES OF A SCULPTOR'S WIFE

BY

MRS. DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH

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TO

D. C. F.

WHOSE LIFE AND WHOSE WORK

HAVE LED ME TO BELIEVE

THAT THESE MEMORIES ARE

WORTH WHILE

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CHAPTER I

A CHILD'S MEMORY OF LINCOLN

They said in the family that it was absurd — that I was too young — that I could not possibly remember the night Lincoln was shot, but I could, and I did. Even now, when I close my eyes, I can feel myself cuddling down in the small bed over in the corner of my mother's room, under the blue-gray curtains, listening to that strange noise outside, of a hand scraping up and down the slats of the blind, and drowsily watching the first, faint glow of the morning creeping into the room.

That is the way, I believe, children remember; in flashes; bright, vivid, flashing pictures — all there is left of those early years of one's life.

There was also an earlier picture of a wedding, of no great international interest certainly, but persisted in by little me in spite of the united opposition of the family.

A very beautiful aunt, whom I adored, had been married in a small town near Boston, and I quite took away the breath of my assembled brothers by announcing that I could remember the ceremony. My cousin Bessie, two years older than I, had met me, so I claimed, upon the narrow staircase, and we had crowded by each other in

our 'weddin' dresses,' in what I hope was only a friendly emulation. I do not remember hers, but mine was very full as to skirt, billowing out over stiff pantalettes. From the waist to the lower edge were groups of tiny tucks, and around this edge were small beads that glittered and sparkled like the jewels in a fairy crown. Could a child ever forget a dress like that?

'Well, let it go as to dress,' agreed my brothers — even a baby might know more about clothes than they did. But when I next remembered that Uncle John Barker had lifted me upon his shoulders, and carried me into the dining-room to gaze upon the good things to eat, and that there, at each end of the showy table, was a high dish of jelly — real calf's-foot jelly — I was almost buried beneath an avalanche of brotherly derision.

'You couldn't 'a' remembered it, smarty, first, because you were too little, and, second, because Uncle John wasn't at the wedding, was he, Ma?'

My mother, who was the gentlest of souls, was forced to admit that Uncle John was not really and truly a relation, that he lived in Washington — at that time a great distance from Concord, Massachusetts — and could hardly have been present.

Sometimes, when my brothers all attacked me at once, I wept, to their great delight, but upon this occasion, at the age of four, I rebelled. 'He *was* there,' I persisted, 'and he did carry me into the dining-room, and the calf's-foot jelly *was* on the table, and it shook — and it shook ——'

As if at any age I could ever forget that slender glass dish, flaring at the top and piled high with shaking, quivering sunlight, for all the world like that line in 'The Night

DAN FRENCH
At Three Years

MAMIE FRENCH
At Three Years

Before Christmas,' descriptive of Santa Claus and his anatomy:

'... And a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.'

I knew perfectly well that the poet was dreaming of calf's-foot jelly when he wrote that immortal line.

My beautiful aunt arrived later and announced that Uncle John Barker *had* been at the wedding, that he had come from Washington for the event, and that she had never been so touched in her life as by this attention.

And all this, be it said with reverence — a baby's mind is never irreverent — is a far cry from the death of our great President, but it goes to show that a very small child *can* remember the most vivid pictures of its life.

It was early morning of the night of April 14, 1865, the light creeping forth after the terrible tragedy of the midnight hour. I lay very still in my little curtained bed in a corner of my mother's room — for Washington was very Southern in those early days, and there was usually a family bedroom on the ground floor. 'Way over in the other corner stood the high-posted bed where slept my mother and father, with three mahogany steps, each step covered with a brown figured carpet, against the side. At its foot, pulled out some three or four feet, was the trundle bed where slept the two youngest children, younger than I, and not yet at the teasing age. I was in reality old enough to be relegated to the room above, but I was a good little girl, of a shy, affectionate nature, and was often allowed to sleep in the small bed in my mother's room, the two younger children occupying the trundle bed, which, as I remember, was used only upon some such occasion. I loved to cuddle down among the pillows, soothed by the

family propinquity, and also to escape from the brothers upstairs in the room next to mine, who were apt to make frightening noises in the middle of the night — just to see what a girl would do.

Midway between my bed and the larger one was the window looking out upon, or at least nearly upon, the street. Around this window, in little threads of mist, the light seemed to be creeping in, the big pieces of furniture standing out in the gloomy shadows; and as I lay very still and watched it, there was a strange noise that seemed to come from nowhere, and made my heart jump right up into my throat. I sat up in the middle of my bed and peered about me into the half-light of the room; the low bed at its foot with its two sleeping cherubs; the fancy white marble mantelpiece with a small soapstone stove in front of it; the big medallions of the carpet standing out faintly, and that queer noise that had so frightened me, as of a hand drawn up and down the blind outside. Suddenly the noise changed, the hand was rapping, softly but firmly rapping, as if to arouse some particular person, without disturbing the neighborhood.

I saw my father rise up suddenly, pause for a moment listening, throw his feet over the side of his bed, feel for the steps, and descend them awkwardly. Again, for a second, he paused and listened, then hurried to the window and threw open the blinds.

The early daylight came like a gray mist filling the room, and there in the open square of the window were the head and shoulders and cap of a policeman! To my childish mind a policeman, always a formidable object, there in the window against the cold gray morning light, seemed like an apparition. I heard my father's quick tone of inquiry,

the other's deep hurried whisper, and then a frightened cry from the bed.

I suppose there was great excitement and confusion, and much conversation and repetition of drifting stories, but I do not remember them. Just one flash of the light breaking in through the stillness of the night, the figure of the man in the window, and the creeping terror of those whispered words. President Lincoln assassinated! Dead! Seward stabbed! My uncle's house guarded!

It seemed that my uncle, Major B. B. French, who was at that time in public life and an intimate friend of Lincoln, lived in a handsome old house upon East Capitol Street, where now stands the north wing of the Library of Congress. It was supposed that, in the confusion of the assassination, all the public men were to be included in the massacre, and guards were sent about to protect the houses of those officially prominent, among others my uncle's. He had sent the policeman down to tell my father.

During these days between the assassination and the funeral, so full of tragic emotions, but a blank in my childish memory, the one outstanding comfort was that, with thousands of other children, I wore a broad black band upon the sleeve of my little dress. These bands were varied as to size and material; especially upon the arms of the negroes, some of them rusty, and here and there a black rag tied in a knot. I remember whole groups of negroes with these mourning symbols on their arms. There was naturally great emulation among us children as to whose band was the broadest, and one little black girl named Lucy — I am quite sure she had no other name and barely any other personality, for I remember her only as weeping aloud because for a moment she was obliged to wear a

jacket and thereby cover up the badge of honor. She was led off by her father, wailing, 'You'se covered de band, you'se covered de band! and how's anybody gwine know I'se in moanin' fo' de Pres-i-dent?' That was the first and last that my memory ever culled of Lucy.

The assassination of the President had happened just two weeks after the fall of Richmond, and though I remember nothing about this myself, my ears were filled with all the drifting stories, many of them happening to those very near to me. Major French, for forty years in Washington, was a friend of all the Presidents. At the time of Lincoln's assassination he was Marshal of the District, etc. His letters are full of comment as to these stirring days:

Monday, April 3rd. At noon the news came that Richmond was taken. I was in Court, which at once adjourned. On getting into the street, I found the population half crazy. Women were on balconies and at windows waving flags, men were shouting, shaking hands and running to and fro, speeches were being made, cannons fired, bands of music moving about playing 'Yankee Doodle,' and I immediately found myself involuntarily keeping step with the music. I came to the Capitol and found a letter from F. W. Seward, Ass't Sec'y of State, advising me that the public buildings would be illuminated. I set all the men I could muster at work.... Tuesday evening the illumination took place. The Capitol made a magnificent display. I had the twenty-third verse of the hundred and eighteenth psalm printed on cloth in enormous letters as a transparency, and stretched on a frame the entire length of the top of the Western Portico of the Capitol, viz., 'This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.' It was lighted up with gas and made a brilliant display, and could be read far up Pennsylvania Avenue.

Saturday evening, April 15th, twelve days later. Arrived home from a visit to Richmond, with a most pleasant party, at about eight o'clock last evening. Went to bed at ten and slept till

nearly daylight. When I awoke and saw that the street lamps had not been extinguished, I arose and saw a sentry pacing up and down before my house. I dressed, and thinking something was wrong, went down to the front door. The soldier said, 'Aren't the doings of last night dreadful?' I asked him what doings, and he replied that the President had been shot in Ford's Theater, and Secretary Seward's throat cut at his residence. I told Mrs. French and then started out. I went first to the Capitol and ordered it closed, and then on to Tenth Street to the house where the President lay. He was surrounded by the members of the cabinet, physicians, generals, etc. I stood at his bedside for a short time. He was breathing heavily, and I was told there was no hope for him. I then went into the room where Mrs. Lincoln and Robert (her son) were, surrounded by her ladies. I took her by the hand and also shook hands with Robert, who was crying audibly. I was then asked to take the President's carriage and go and get Mrs. Sec'y Wells, which I did.

The President died at twenty-two minutes past seven A.M. He was taken to the White House about nine A.M., and I saw him removed from the temporary coffin. I gave all the directions that I could as to preparations for the funeral and came away about 12. Came through the Capitol, gave directions for clothing it in mourning and came home. It has been ascertained beyond doubt that the President was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. The attack on the Sec'y of State was an exceedingly desperate one, and not only the Sec'y but his two sons and two servants were wounded, F. W. Seward, it is feared, mortally. There is no doubt it was an organized conspiracy. At the hour of the attack there was a sudden extinguishing of all the lights on the terrace of the western front of the Capitol. The police discovered it at once, and had them relighted.

Another brief account of the night of the surrender of Richmond comes from my cousin Lucia, a girl of fifteen at the time, who went out with friends to hear the music and see the crowd. They started early in the evening, and, after wandering aimlessly about, were the first to stroll into the grounds of the White House, which was, of course, brilliantly illuminated. Every one was in a state of tense

silence, the place gradually began to fill with people, and my cousin and her friends were crowded into a spot close under the front windows. After a short time one of these windows was thrown open, and the head and shoulders of the President appeared against the glare of the lighted room behind. He spoke to the crowd with, even for him, unusual emotion, the bands playing, the people outside listening and cheering alternately. Finally, some one called out, 'Give us Dixie,' and, quick as a flash, Lincoln leaned out of the window and said, 'Yes, give us Dixie, I think we have *achieved* Dixie.' And the young girl, in after years, used to say that she had stood there feeling almost sanctified in the light of that great achievement, and the glow upon the face of the great President.

She also used to tell of an incident that happened in the family, of which I had no memory at the time, although I recall well enough with what excitement my brothers and cousins used to tell and retell the story. One of them, a cousin, by name Charlie Russell, a handsome youth — I have forgotten his exact age — was for years afterwards a hero in their eyes.

As I have said, the city was in a terrible state of tension and excitement, following the assassination. People were ordered to stay close to their homes; those upon Capitol Hill were not allowed to go down hill; those downtown were not allowed to climb the hill; no one of course was permitted to leave the city. People were watched and questioned upon every corner. The police force of that day, I believe, consisted of forty men.

But in spite of these precautions, in spite of the tenseness in the very air, this young man, of perfect health and a normal conscience, slept peacefully through the early

hours, dressed himself about six o'clock, and, with a friend, started off upon a shooting expedition. They went along, their guns over their shoulders, through the quiet streets of Capitol Hill, too unconscious to notice or at least to bother about any unusual tension in the air; and so escaped all interference until, at the edge of the town, they reached an old bridge that led into Virginia. The bridge was guarded, and, to their great surprise and indignation, they were arrested. Carrying guns and leaving the city were both suspicious doings. Didn't they know that nobody was allowed to go anywhere? And when several of the guards congregated about them, one of them called out, pointing at my cousin, 'That one looks just like the murderer, John Wilkes Booth, dark and handsome.' It was true that my cousin, except as to age, answered exactly the description of Booth, slender, a delicately handsome face, and wonderful dark eyes.

It must have been a shock to young Russell's nerves at the time, unused to movies and the thrills of Sunday newspapers, to be arrested as a murderer, even though a subject of pride among the youths of Capitol Hill for months afterwards. The guards were on the point of carrying them off to the station house, but the evident frankness of the boys, and the gross innocence of trying to walk out of town in broad daylight with guns over their shoulders, made its impression. The young men persuaded their captors to go first to their own house, and, when Mrs. Russell and the family greeted them with exclamations of astonishment and recognition, the prisoners were released without further trouble.

On the second day, my father took me to the Capitol to see the body of the great President lying in state. Still

out-of-doors in the sunlight, we went up a thousand steps, more or less, to the entrance — broad, deep, white marble steps, so steep that each one was a scramble. My father wished to carry me, at times insisted, but I was thrilled with the pride of accomplishment. 'No, no,' I protested. 'I want to do it my own self.' And I almost dislocated my little legs in my efforts to keep up with the swarming crowd about me. I may have been carried the last nine hundred, but I remember only the ones up which I struggled; then, the great circular room — reaching up, up to the very heavens — and nothing in it, save a solid black pile in the middle, my father's legs striding along on a level with my eyes, the floor of inlaid marble beneath my pattering feet, and a sense — an overwhelming sense — of silence and of space.

We went in through a little door at the left about halfway back, as near as one can describe the directions of a circle — I made up my mind that I would go again sometime and see if the little door really *was* at the left, and whether it really was little. At any rate, we went through it and up a winding staircase in the wall. It was a queer little staircase, narrow, of iron, the steps growing smaller toward the center, and I was interested to find that, even upon the narrow end, my tiny feet could stand. We came out, finally, into one of the great galleries, with its light stone railing, which was all I could see at first. My father lifted me up and placed me upon the balustrade so that I could swing out into space and gaze down, down into the depths below, and they were mighty depths, the walls going up, up, and down, down, until they reached the inlaid floor which I had just left, the floor stretching out endlessly to meet the walls.

CHARLES RUSSELL
Arrested as the murderer

JOHN WILKES BOOTH
Murderer of Lincoln

From the great entrance door, which they reached by the thousand steps outside, came a surging line of black figures. They came slowly, monotonously, moving around the great pile in the center in a half-circle, and on and on out of the door to the west. Many, many people were there in that long, black trail, but they were so slow, so steady, so compact, that the rest of the great rotunda was still empty and big, the greatest sense of space which I have ever felt.

In the middle, upon the inlaid floor, stood the big black pile. At the end toward me it seemed long and narrow, at the top it slightly broadened out. I knew it was a casket — my brothers had initiated me more than once into the mysteries of the funereal side of life. The upper part of the coffin was open, presumably covered with glass, and there, peaceful and still, was the face of Lincoln. As I close my eyes and look back upon it, it seems as if the face were large and white, as if carved out of marble, the face of a giant lying there asleep. How much of this was memory, how much of it the result of pictures that grew up in my mind during those days after the funeral, when the personality of the great President was upon every lip, I do not know, but it is thus I have always seen him.

I must have, at some moment, stood upon the floor of the gallery — a funny little figure in pantalettes and broad-brimmed hat — for one of my chief memories is of standing close against the railing which towered above my head, my face pressed between the upstanding columns, my eyes peering into the depths below, my father's restraining hand upon my coat at the back of my neck.

We have in the family a treasured heirloom, a tiny cluster of dried flowers — a rose and some leaves — which

my uncle, who loved him, gathered from the bunch resting within Lincoln's hand.

Those weeks — and months — and years — after the death of the President are a strange jumble in my mind, so much that was tragic and terrible, so much that was tender, so much that was humorous, coming in little — unexplained — points of memory to the surface, many of them, doubtless, in the wrong place — all the excitement about the murderers and their escape, the tracking of Booth, the intimate details of the White House, and we smaller children listening, listening, with distended ears and bulging eyes, to conversations which, in moments of such excitement, could not be restrained.

My father had known Lincoln, had played at bowls with him in those early days before his advent to the White House, and he always laughed when he spoke of the Rail-Splitter's long arms which swung out like windmills. They accused him of taking an unfair advantage, beginning, as he did, halfway down the alley.

I find in Dr. Busey's account of old Washington some particulars as to the boarding-house where they all lived. There were but few small hotels at that time and many prominent people lived at Mrs. Spriggs's, the fourth of a row of houses known as Carroll Row. It stood upon First Street, near South A, and fronted the Capitol upon the block where now stands the Library. There were Senators and members of Congress there, General Duff-Green whose daughter married the son of John C. Calhoun, socially prominent, and as Dr. Busey quotes: 'Abraham Lincoln, then in Congress, Edmund French [my father], and myself.'

Lincoln was evidently recognized, even in those days, as

an interesting personality, and his amiable disposition made him popular in the household. Somewhat reserved as to serious subjects, he showed the same ingenuity for which he was famous in later years, for diverting dangerous arguments by way of some amusing anecdote.

When they played bowls, at which he was somewhat awkward, but which he did largely for amusement and for exercise, he kept up a running fire of witticisms and funny illustrations of whatever might be happening at the moment. On the afternoons or evenings when he played, people crowded in because they knew there would be something to laugh at. 'His witticisms seemed, for the most part, to be impromptu, but he always told the anecdotes and jokes as if he wished to give the impression that he had heard them from some one, but they appeared very many times as if they had been made for that immediate occasion.'

'Old Abe,' my uncle used to say — 'they find fault with him, they say all kinds of things about him, but I believe in him. He's got the real stuff in him.'

CHAPTER II

EARLY WASHINGTON

We smaller children lived the war and its aftermath vicariously, so to speak, our knowledge, our judgment, breathed in through the arguments, the long discussions of our elders, my father and his neighboring friends; my brothers, just growing to manhood; the returning troops; the bedraggled prisoners; the great camp — or so it seemed to our childish eyes — in front of the house; the tense undercurrent in every voice, the recurrent reference to those who would never come back. Through the mystic curtain the actors stand out boldly: the big stolid figure of Grant; the clean-cut figure of Lee, recognized even by his enemies, even at that agitated time, as a great general; Little Mac, whom the soldiers loved in spite of all criticism; the dramatic flight of the romantic-eyed Booth; Jefferson Davis, whom I picture as always escaping, and always in hoopskirts, and — Lincoln!

The terrible abuse through which the great President had lived was something of which I learned only long afterwards. My family adored him; at that time people spoke of him with universal gentleness, and the darkies, who were our constant friends and companions, looked upon him as a god. I know also that there was bitterness toward the South, but of this I heard little, though we were good Yankees. Our friends about the country, Virginia and Maryland, were many of them Southern, and also I imagine that an incident which happened in our

family circle served to temper our thoughts, and brought home to us the enormity of the tragedy of civil war.

An aunt of ours — one of those adopted aunts whom all children have upon the edge of the family circle — a very lovely woman, by name Aunt Rebecca, left alone by the exigencies of the struggle, came to live with us. Her brother, our dearly beloved Uncle John, went into the Northern army; her husband, our still more dearly beloved companion, Uncle Bill, for some unknown, or at least forgotten, reason, went South and fought in the Southern ranks. All during those terrible years and those hot summer months, her mind, and in a lesser degree, the minds of her friends, my family, must have been torn by conflicting sympathy, but never, I am sure, by conflicting loyalty.

The two uniforms — the blue and the gray — both of them old, the gray stained and bedraggled, were in our attic all during our childhood, and my brothers dressed up in them and fought over, with a somewhat vague and unformulated bitterness, the battles in which they had been too young to take part.

One very definite thing, which I do remember, was that my father, and many of the friends about him, never believed that Mrs. Surratt was guilty; that the assassins undoubtedly met in her house, but that she was unconscious of the enormity of their plans.

'Have you read the trial of the conspirators?' wrote my uncle to his brother. 'I have read it pretty faithfully, and think Mrs. Surratt, Herold, Payne, and Atzerodt will be found guilty, but I do not believe any one but Payne will be hanged. There is no evidence against O'Laughlin, and but little against Mudd, Arnold, and Spangler. Herold is

too simple to be hung — Mrs. Surratt is a *woman*, and Atzerodt, however guilty at one time, *backed* out at the last moment, confessed, and put the detectives on the track of Booth. Perhaps the President may think it best to make an example of one or two more; if he does, Mrs. Surratt and Herold will be in danger.'

The judge who tried the murderers was always looked at rather askance in the neighborhood. He lived on Capitol Hill, and evidently felt the criticism, for he went about but little, and the blinds of his house were always kept down. We children used to watch his house curiously, because in the front yard was a small fountain, a basin for the water that never flowed, supported by the figure of a woman which the boys called, jokingly, 'Mrs. Surratt.'

One of the accused who was spared lived next door to us afterwards — many years afterwards. I do not remember his name, but he was still a young man when we children used to watch him going in and out of the house. He was young even then, a slight, colorless-looking man, who never seemed to speak to any one, even to my brothers, who were omnivorous in their social instincts.

Washington, having been chosen deliberately as the Capital, at that time an unprecedented procedure, must have been very different from most American cities, though my acquaintance with cities of any kind was limited. I remember it as a medley of broad avenues, stretching out with a fanlike regularity, a group of classic buildings at one end, the end farthest removed from where we lived, scattered houses of every size and variety — shacks — and heat — and darkies! Darkies everywhere; boys and girls who played with us, and worked for us after

a devoted, if somewhat spasmodic, fashion, little pickaninnies with rolling eyes, and pigtails sticking out from their woolly heads; and the tumbledown, or, more correctly speaking, propped-up shacks in which they lived, one or two of them leaning confidingly against the old wooden fence at the foot of our garden. And the heat, which started early and lasted late, which grew and grew, shut down like a pall upon us in June and stayed with us into October, seething up from the asphalt, oozing out from the buildings, beating down from the merciless blue above. I hardly know which was more closely associated with that early Washington life — the heat or the darkies.

Our house was upon Capitol Hill, some five or six streets east of the Capitol. In front of the house was a tract of land known to us children as the Common, its edges plunging down in sharp declivities to beaten paths politely called sidewalks. Only the thoroughfares were paved.

I have little memory, as a child, as to the other end of the town, with the sole exception of the White House to which we were sometimes taken upon sight-seeing pilgrimages — a long ride in a jogging horse-car.

The new part of Washington, where I lived, Capitol Hill, had been laid out in the march of improvement by cutting a crisscross of streets, regardless of anything save the future beauty of the city, leaving the houses — most of them small and insignificant — wherever they happened to be. Those which had been built upon the low land rested peacefully, flush with the street, and were easily accessible. Some of them, like ours, which had been built upon prominent sites, had been left high and dry, the banks cut away from their gardens and porches, up and

down which ran flights of wooden steps with railings at the sides, usually rickety. I remember these railings well because it was like a game — trying to hold on to them with our little hands — and because for the same reason we were forbidden to climb upon them. In fact, my early life is filled with pictures of my small self descending laboriously these long flights of steps, picking my way across the muddy, clayey streets, and clambering up the steps at the other side, where my small friends lived in *their* houses, perched high upon *their* banks. We called them by the names of the people who, like tribes, inhabited them: 'Mamie French's bank,' 'Lizzie Toucy's bank,' etc.

There were scattered about the neighborhood numerous old-fashioned houses with large grounds, which had been estates, left, like our smaller one, high and dry by the wholesale cutting through of streets. There was the Pourtalès place, our next neighbor, which must have had a name, though I have forgotten it, and many times a day we descended the steps of *our* bank, waded across the muddy street, and clambered up the numberless steps of the Pourtalès bank, a toilsome, but, to our childish minds, a perfectly natural, proceeding.

At some distance up the road — at the back of our house — everything was road or common, the only paved street being the paved avenue in front; as the darkies would have said, 'a right smart distance' up the road stood 'Duddington,' the remnant of the old estate where upon its own particular hill lived the Carrolls, while next it upon its hill stood that of the Nicholsons, the name of which I have forgotten. To these old places we went habitually, though not so constantly as to our neighbors,

the Pourtalèses, for the way was both rough and muddy, or, if by the paved avenue, circuitous.

Each of these great houses had its story, only threads of which stay in my memory, and each of them was swept, gradually, inevitably swept, in the devastating march of improvement, into oblivion. There were also numberless smaller houses, commodious and dignified, where lived the old families of Washington, or at least that fraction of them with which I at that time came in contact, the Chiltons, the Middletons, the Brents — my grandfather's house, upon New Jersey Avenue among them, though he and his family were not originally Washingtonians.

My grandfather was named Peter Brady and had come over from Ireland with his English wife and settled in Washington, goodness knows why, for it must have seemed a forlorn place in 1812, with the new White House at one end of a wilderness, the Capitol at the other, and here and there an estate such as Duddington, each in its own little wilderness, miles apart. My grandfather's house upon New Jersey Avenue was by no means one of the grand houses, but it was large, with high ceilings and mahogany doors, and here, backing up on the very crest, so that it was, in the back, to us children's great delight, some seven stories down the bank.

Here, at times, came Andrew Jackson, his friend, and, when the latter was President, my grandfather was his private secretary. There were many intimate stories of 'Old Hickory,' but the special one which I remember, is of my grandfather's taking his two little girls to visit the President. They were taken upstairs into the President's office, where he sat in a big armchair near the window.

He must have been a rather formidable figure, seated in a wing chair, in a flowered dressing-gown and slippers, his bushy eyebrows and hair and beard rather startling to the younger of the children. He was smoking a long clay pipe.

They obediently crossed the room with their father, and stood in front of him, looking like old daguerreotypes in their big bonnets and pantalettes. My aunt, at first, was somewhat shy, and hardly spoke. The old man was cordial, laughed at them, joked with them, asked their names and ages, and finally glanced about him upon a near-by table.

'I wish I had something to give you,' he said, 'but I don't see anything that children would like.'

Little Mary Ellen seemed about this time to have recovered her courage. She was, I think, about six years old.

'I know what I'd *like* to have,' she lisped, looking very self-conscious, twisting the ribbon of her sash in her two little hands.

'Heigh-ho!' said the President, 'you know what you'd like? Well, what is it?'

And after a moment, the child with a great effort, as if the temptation were too great to resist: 'I'd like — that long pipe.'

'You'd like this pipe?' repeated the old General. 'This pipe that I'm smoking?' — growing more and more amused. 'What on earth would a little girl like you do with a pipe like this?'

'I'd blow — soapbubbles,' said Mary Ellen promptly, having evidently forgotten her bashfulness.

At this the President threw himself back in his chair, took the pipe out of his mouth, and laughed.

'You'd blow soapbubbles,' he said. 'Well, well, that's a new idea. But what would *I* do?'

'I don't know,' said the child, as if his question staggered her a little.

'Well, well,' said the President, greatly amused. 'I don't see how I could give up my pipe. I'm so wedded to it. I don't think I could get along without it. But perhaps I could find something else. I'll see.'

The next day, about noon, one of the servants came rushing upstairs in a state of great excitement. 'Oh, there's a gran' cah'ige in front o' de house. You chil'en come look at it.' Of course every one rushed to the front windows, and there, sure enough, was a very grand carriage at the curb, with a pair of fine horses, and two men up in front, the darkies and the children in the street gathering about it.

The younger of the men descended from his perch, opened the door of the carriage, took out a long box, brought it up the steps of the terrace, along the walk, up the steps of the house, and rang the bell. Before the latter had ceased to tinkle, the two colored maids, with the children at their heels, had opened the door.

'A package from de Executive Mansion,' said the footman with great importance, 'fo' little Miss May Ellen Brady, and signed, "Andrew Jackson."'

For years afterwards, this pipe, with the letter tacked beneath it, hung above the door in the library of my grandfather's house, but when the house was torn down, in the course of developments, my aunt sent it to a museum.

The one spot perhaps which seems to me, when I close

my eyes and think about it, most closely identified with those early years is the common, the particular common in front of our house. It was not very big — one fourth, perhaps, of a city block — compared to the wilderness of commons which stretched out beyond us into the unexplored country to the east. All the open spaces were called commons — but this was *our* common, much more our own than the family parlor or kitchen could ever have been. To us it seemed of endless size, and was a playground for all the children who lived near us. It was frankly recognized as the very best common in the neighborhood. It was flat and adapted to games, the bank at the front was unusually steep, giving it a sense of privacy, and my mother was an unfailingly hospitable mother.

Then there were so many of us, one older sister and, in later years, one younger, five brothers of assorted sizes — and me. They were always there, always 'out on the common,' and this brought the other children, the dogs and the darkies, these latter the offspring of the older negroes who worked for us, who intermittently helped a little, themselves, and were our friends in a relationship which I believe rarely existed in any other land. And the darkies brought their goats and tethered them there, and they really did eat tin cans, for I saw them do it!

Here the children fought, they wrestled, they played games; they had picnics, the dogs barked, and the darkies took blissful naps in the sun. As to my brothers, they fought always with each other or together against a common foe. The place might have been called an isolated plateau infested with brothers and darkies, and in the summer-time seething with heat.

In front of the common, slightly at right angles and

bisecting that part of the city from the Capitol to the Navy Yard, ran Pennsylvania Avenue, the only street which at that time was paved. Up and down the avenue, at all hours of the day and night, went soldiers of every description, regiments of infantry, artillery, cavalry, horses bedraggled and jaded, others prancing and romantic, rumbling, bumping cannon, implements for killing which since the Great War would seem like child's play; but to one little girl back in those dark ages, that avenue and that common were the theatre of the war.

One of my most vivid memories is of General Custer riding almost daily by the house at the head of his men, his horse always galloping, his collar open at the neck, his broad white sombrero at a rakish angle, his long blond hair, like a knight of old, waving about his shoulders. I do not know whether he was as romantic a figure as I remember him, but he was the adored among the older girls, my sister and her friends, who used to sit upon the bank at a certain hour of the day to see him pass. Also, I do not know whether this happened often, but I remember his lifting his hat with a flourish and bowing low in the saddle, then the officers about him lifting their hats, and the troop dashing off down the avenue. I think it may have been an unusual occasion, for I also remember these girls sitting up half the night in their room, next to mine, talking and giggling about him.

Sometimes, the soldiers camped upon this common in front of our house, a period of mixed excitement and tribulation. We loved, of all things, to watch them, though at such times we were not allowed the usual freedom. I can see cause for my mother's anxiety, her six sons in such close propinquity to a soldiers' camp, and I always think of my-

self as standing close to various openings in the fence, giving them apples and receiving treasures in the shape of hardtack, broken shells, etc.

I heard afterward that these things happened often, but I always think of one particular occasion when we watched them, in bitter tears, packing up and going away. It seemed as if the end of the world had come; as if they had been there always. The boys were busy for days afterward gathering up the treasures left behind: odds and ends of broken firearms, an occasional knife, and, above all — Bibles. As I remember it, the entire common had sprouted Bibles. The boys around the neighborhood came and gathered them in baskets, some of them well-worn, places marked with pencils and papers, but the majority of them as new as if they had never been opened. After that our house was stacked with Bibles and Testaments. I treasured one, a very dilapidated little book, which I was allowed to keep for myself and to take to bed with me. The ideas of hygiene in those days were different!

In or about the year 1869, our family moved from the house in which we had previously lived, from its bank with its rickety steps, and its common which had been to me the scene of life and war, over across two or three open streets to another home. This house was called picturesque and romantic, as it must have been, I think, even to other people, for it was always spoken of, after it had long disappeared from sight, as the 'old Barney Parsons house.'

It was certainly very different, quite a wonderful old building running along the street, long and low, a blank wooden wall with small windows at violently irregular intervals, and a tiny square porch, up in the air, at the

front door, with a wooden railing, and a short staircase hugging the wall. I don't know why the door was stranded in the air like this. It looked like an afterthought, for we certainly no longer lived upon a bank, which fact must have seemed strange to us children after our daily, indeed, hourly, climbs up and down the rickety steps: but children are adaptable, and I have no memory of it except that it was all new and exciting.

Inside I remember a square room which was called the hall. The house must have been only the depth of this hall, and consisted of rooms of different sizes and heights and elevations, running along the street to right and left. Everybody went through everybody else's room, as they seem to have done in the old Venetian palaces, and always up and down a step or two, with only a tiny window with tiny panes here and there; just a glimpse of the street or the garden outside. At the back was a lean-to forming a long and tolerably wide porch with a brick floor, and supported by plain wooden posts. This floor was of bricks laid sideways with an irregular pattern near the outer edge, which would imply more of a claim to architecture than I associate with the plain old structure, though I am sure that nowadays, in this early American craze, it would be deified into a shrine.

We lived in it only a few years, from which I infer that it was not greatly popular with my elders, my mother probably agreeing with my aunt, who wanted 'nothing picturesque and inconvenient in *her* life.' 'I'm sick to death of ancestral things,' she used to say crisply. 'I want a nice, new, spick-and-span, vulgar house, where I can raise my own rats and cockroaches.' My father accordingly built a nice, new, what we should call nowadays a vulgar, house:

a square box with a mansard roof, a belvedere on the top, and a bay window at the side. This we lived in all during my early childhood and youth.

It was an ugly house according to our more artistic modern taste, but certainly convenient and roomy, and supposed at that time to be rather elegant. People were tired of the early American and the Colonial. My uncle, who lived in a really fine house, constantly refers to it in his letters as being very handsome. The bay window, which was the *pièce de résistance*, not only in the house, but in the neighborhood, was naturally in the parlor, and, though it was not in reality very comfortable or very beautiful, we never realized that until real bay windows came into fashion again. We young people built a seat in it, rather high and rather hard, and draped a shawl over one end of it. People who were building new houses came and stood outside and admired it, called it artistic, and went home and built other uncomfortable spots just like it.

CHAPTER III

DAN FRENCH'S FIRST APPEARANCE IN MY LIFE

'And some have greatness thrust upon them.' As I look back upon my life, I seem always to have basked in some one else's reflected glory. For years of my youth, I was Harry French's sister. Then, after many years, I was Dan French's wife, and after a still longer period, when I dined out, I was sometimes greeted by the query, 'Are you Peggy French's mother?'

In the years before this, I must have begun to hear about my cousin, Daniel Chester French, or, as he was called, not only at that time, but all through his life, 'Dan' French. He was ten years older than I, and he had always, even as a child, come to Washington in the days before I was born, but the chronology of my earlier acquaintance with him is sadly mixed.

When I was ten years old, I went with my father to Concord, Massachusetts, where lived all my relations, and here for the first time — at least the first time to remember — I met my cousin Dan French. He was about nineteen, and was living with his family in the old house, and had just started in upon his career as a sculptor. Fortunately for him, his father, Judge French, was a cultured man of a literary turn of mind, and interested in following up any artistic tendencies in his children. Some years before, Miss May Alcott had given Dan the tools with which to work, and he had already made a number of busts — his father, his sister, etc.

His father, when Dan was only sixteen, had brought home a large package of clay from Boston, and the two boys, Dan and Will, had sat about the table in the evening, and tried, unaided, to turn the clay into statues. His brother Will, who was cleverly artistic in many directions, experimented and made various small things, going quickly from one to another, while Dan, with perhaps a more sculpturesque talent, tried to make one head which he stuck to persistently the whole evening, which, as I think of it, was characteristic of him. They did not know, however, how to manage the clay, how to keep it soft, so nothing came of it.

Also, at an earlier time, they had made some snow lions in the front yard of their house in Cambridge. They had lived in Cambridge for some years, and it was there that Dan had formed his boyish friendships with William Brewster, the ornithologist, and with Richard H. Dana — friendships which have remained through their entire lives.

These lions — I believe it was a grown lion and a small one — attracted a great deal of attention. In fact, on Sunday morning after church, the street was quite packed with returning church-goers who clustered about the fence in apparently absorbed interest, though my husband always disclaimed any large part in the creation of this work of art. 'They were the work,' he said, 'of my older brother and a friend.'

I remember that he tried to make a head or relief of me, but I was an unappreciative little person, nor could I for one moment keep still, and he finally gave it up in despair.

His first work of art pleased me as a child, as it does now. In an old scrapbook is a small square of folded paper. In the middle of the paper is a large spotted bird gazing at

FIRST WORK OF ART OF DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH
'Dannie French wrote this bird' at the age of five

something that might be a cross, or, to a bird, might even look like a tree. Underneath is written in his mother's fine writing, 'Danny French wrote this bird.' This, at his request, at the age of five.

Another of Judge French's letters says: 'Dan wakes up and goes to bed smiling.' And there is a beautiful daguerreotype, taken at about the time he 'wrote' his first work of art, that seems to express a youthful optimism: a little boy of five in an embroidered dress slipping from his shoulders, curls, and a most engaging smile — which was unusual in the long exposure of a daguerreotype. He was gazing ecstatically, so they say, upon a small yellow canary, held aloft by the photographer's assistant; enough to make any child laugh with glee.

Years after, when I showed this picture to my child, she sat up in bed, gazing at it a long time, having just had her own picture taken, and said, 'That's Margit,' as she then called herself.

'Oh, no,' I said, 'that isn't Margit. You will have to guess again.'

Again she gazed upon it, and said with conviction, 'Well, if it isn't Margit, it's papa when he was a little girl.'

Mr. William French, to whom the optimism of his younger brother greatly appealed, used to tell another story about him.

'One morning when Dan was six or seven years old, he picked up the cat, remarking, "I guess I'll take my cat and go down cellar and catch a rat."

'He disappeared down the cellar stairs and in a few minutes returned with the cat still in his arms, and, to the surprise of the family, a rat in the mouth of the cat.

'While this was unaccountable to the onlookers, it

seemed perfectly simple to small Daniel. He had noticed that, whenever he went into the milk cellar, a rat had sought a hiding-place behind a box in the corner, and it occurred to him that if he brought his cat and set her down close to the box, and then moved the box, she would do the rest — which she did. Then he picked up the cat again, and that was all there was about it.'

It did not surprise him as much as it would have later in life that his scheme worked out so easily; perhaps his faith had something to do with it.

My trip to Concord was, of course, a great event to small me; travelling was unusual in those days, and most of my life and of that of my family was spent, and most of the associations of my childhood — a wonderfully happy childhood — were with that new house on North Carolina Avenue, with its bay window, its large grounds with cherry and other fruit trees, its stray cats and dogs, the brothers and the darkies. My mother was a kind of fairy godmother to all the children and all the colored people in the neighborhood, and they came to her and laid their joys and sorrows at her feet.

The brothers were getting to be big boys now, although there were three younger than I, and a baby sister, and our place succeeded the common as a playground for the neighborhood. It was large, what afterwards comprised a whole city block, and we lived there like little savages, climbing up and tumbling out of trees, swinging in swings, exercising our limbs on what we called 'paralyzed' (parallel) bars, eating cherries and half-ripe fruit. My mother said we began on the currants and gooseberries when they were nothing but blossoms.

We went to a Presbyterian Sunday School, not because of any affiliations with Presbyterianism, but because Dr. Chester, the minister, was, as may be a stray pastor of any denomination, one of the saints of the earth.

Although my father's family was of good New England stock, there was little Puritanism in our bringing-up. Of course there was a devil and a hell somewhere in the background, of which, nowadays, we hear but little, but they were far less terrible in our household than in many which I afterwards came to know. I do remember lying awake at night in my little bed, the moonlight staring down at me through the window, and wondering whether I would have to go to hell when I died, but I am quite sure the attack was sporadic, and I am also quite sure that my brothers had no such fears. You can never tell about tastes, and what may have been at times a horror to me was to them a delicious thrill; with their active, full-blooded little personalities, they probably needed a modicum of horrors as a stimulant.

One of them, Ned, the one who in his earlier youth had taken to swearing, leaned against my mother's side, reciting his catechism, 'God is my Father,' etc., and then squirming around against her shoulder, 'Oh, don't bother with that part, Mamma,' he cried cheerfully; 'turn over to the other part 'bout hell and brimstone.'

Indeed, the brothers seemed to revel in religious horrors and the doings of the church, whatever they were, and a rule was made in our family that no boy who had not been to Sunday School for a certain number of weeks during the fall should be permitted to go, suddenly and violently, the last few Sundays before Christmas; which rule seemed to imply a good normal appreciation of the Christmas tree and the Christmas stocking.

The city, as I look back upon it, was at this time losing some of its bare aspect; the banks growing over with grass, the streets beginning to look like streets, and the whole place planted with trees, rows and rows of slender straight saplings, each one surrounded by a 'tree-box,' a little prison-like structure of wooden slats, higher than the head of a man. The improvements of the city, the cutting through of the avenues, the laying-out of parks, the planting of thousands and thousands of trees was the work of one of our public officials named Shepherd — 'Boss' Shepherd every one called him — and the term came to be an execration upon the lips of at least the younger generation. Of course the city was going to be beautiful sometime, but the process was devastating. The taxes went up and up until families were impoverished. In my father's case, for instance, who owned a city block, lot after lot had to be sold to pay these exorbitant taxes.

An old Washingtonian said to me the other day, 'Do you remember how we all hated Boss Shepherd?' Perhaps the older people had some glimpse of the good behind the evil, but we children took the condemnation literally. This man, whom I always heard spoken of with bitterness, was not a man, he was a fiend, a half mysterious worker of evil who had cast an unholy spell over the lives of our elders. I have heard of late that a statue — somewhere, by somebody — has been erected to Shepherd as a benefactor, a fact which has made one person, who has lived long enough to follow this very gradual change of face, everlastingly doubtful as to the infallibility of contemporary judgment.

As I said before, the street had begun to blossom out with foliage from the trees so ignominiously planted. Even

though they were new and small, they began to make the city beautiful, but the spot where the trees always seemed most beautiful to me was my Uncle Major's house on East Capitol Street. It was a large brick house standing back from the street, with rooms upon either side of the hall, and surrounded by old-fashioned grounds. These grounds, while in no way magnificent, were quaint in the accepted Colonial style. There was a long grape arbor; there were walks with box hedges leading to the summer house and the croquet ground; there was a sundial, and what to us seemed like a fairy creation, a fountain, tier after tier of dripping water, and at times a plank leading in from the outer edge to the lower basin, a most fascinating bridge which we children were forbidden to cross. This fountain now stands in the garden of the Major's grandson, Mr. Amos Tuck French, in Tuxedo.

On a small lawn in a jog at the back of the house was a wrought-iron table with a marble top and six wrought-iron chairs, the former of which stands at present in our garden at 'Chesterwood.' But the thing which we all loved best was the great magnolia tree — *Magnolia grandiflora* — which is usually seen in its glory only in the South. This particular tree, however, though there were others in the garden, was by far the most luscious and perfect example of its kind in Washington, its great pointed polished leaves and tall vaselike flowers reaching upward to the sky.

To us children, they seemed like enchanted blossoms, and to pick one or two upon occasion, and to send them off to our relations in New England, who had never seen them, was like a function, of which one of my big brothers was the high priest. He would mount upon the stepladder — the

branches must not be bent or pulled — and snip off with great care the end of a spray, two or three leaves surrounding a velvet flower. He would press the leaves up carefully about the waxy blossom, wrap them in tissue paper, and tie them gently into place, we children gazing fascinated, as if it were some rare jewel, as indeed it was. The slightest pressure brought out a deep brown stain upon the white petals. The end of the juicy stem was enveloped in a wad of wet cotton, or, better still, planted in a hole made in the bisected surface of a large potato, which was supposed to supply moisture for days; then the whole thing was packed in a box of loose tissue paper, and was received next evening by our friends in Massachusetts or New Hampshire in perfect condition. For years after the Library of Congress was built, this great magnolia tree stood in the Library grounds; but so much building in its vicinity was probably bad for it, and a few years ago it disappeared.

I spent so much of my time in this house that it seemed quite as much my home as the square box of a house with a bay window, where I grew up with my family. And, Dan French, when he came back from Italy in 1875, spent several winters in this romantic home.

My uncle's second wife was my mother's sister; her name was Mary Ellen, but we children called her 'Laine.' They were without small children and would have adopted me, but my father and mother, for some reason, having only seven other little treasures of their own, were unwilling to give me up.

I loved the house dearly, a link between the grand old places of the neighborhood, like 'Duddington' — still in a state of dying glory — and the newer architecture of my growing years. The parlor was especially beautiful; a long

room with two fireplaces, a soft grey paper sparsely dotted with tiny gold medallions and floating ribbons, and with what we called 'vanishing' mirrors, between the windows at each end, and resplendent with red damask. This damask had come from the Supreme Court. When the Court was refurnished, my uncle, being on the spot, had bought the damask. The remnants still decorate our living-room at 'Chesterwood.'

The curtains in the old parlor had gold metal lambrequins across the top, and, halfway down, great gold ornaments to drape them back. All the chairs and ottomans were covered with the damask, and two rosewood sofas, the backs going up in points at each end, and sagging in the middle like a broken-backed horse, but delicate and carved, not like most of the horsehair furniture of the day.

The round mirrors between the red curtains at either end of the room were also a source of great amusement to us children. They were convex, with glass prisms, and had a curious way of enlarging and decreasing the reflected image, and we used to stand in the great silent room — all parlors are more or less silent — moving slowly backward and forward, making faces, sticking out our tongues, and distorting our bodies in noisy delight.

Over the door of the library, across the hall, hung, during my childhood, the long clay pipe with which my aunt, when a little girl, had been presented by Andrew Jackson for the purpose of blowing soapbubbles, but I am quite sure it was never used except as a decoration.

My uncle must have been a very interesting personage — very much beloved. He was a lawyer, but held various public positions, Marshal, Commissioner of Public Build-

ings, and others which brought him in touch with interesting people. He cared little about positions of great responsibility. 'They talk,' he writes upon one occasion, 'of making me Attorney-General. I don't want to be Attorney-General. I want to be Marshal.' He liked to ride a horse, like a child to be in the midst of things. He was the first President of the Morse Telegraph Company, or, as they called it, the Magneto Telegraph, and was a Mason of the thirty-third degree. As I remember him, he always seemed to me a jolly, plump 'Colonel Newcome.' He was tender-hearted, impetuous, violent of speech, with a violence at which we children smiled because it was so frankly of a surface nature. He was pleased by the most trivial attentions; he was moved by the most barefaced tale of distress.

He was greatly given to swearing, as were many of the men of that period. I believe it has become rather a lost art in these days, except upon the golf links, where I hear it is still rampant. There were stories about his swearing in which even at that time we delighted. He would say of his most dignified first wife, 'Betsy told me she'd be damned if she'd do any such thing,' and then, when he realized how he was misquoting her, he would laugh and add, 'Wasn't that the way you expressed it, Betsy dear?'

On another occasion, also, when his attention was called to some urchins who were swearing in front of the house, he called to them from the window, telling them to stop and go away. Not being obeyed, he shook his fist at them, hurried from the house, down the steps, gesticulating and muttering along the walk, and some one watching him always *claimed* that he admonished them: 'If you little devils don't stop that swearing, I'll knock your damned little

heads together,' which must certainly have had the desired effect.

His standard of swearing must have been high, for he used to quote a friend from the wilds of New Hampshire who seemed overwhelmed at the sight of him. 'Why, God damn your soul to hell, French, but I'm glad to see you,' retold the Major with glee.

One of the things that I associate with my uncle's place are the clothes that people wore. I was very fond of clothes, and, quite naturally, croquet being the fashionable game, the young people wore their prettiest gowns upon the croquet ground. Every one had croquet greens of their own, but by far the most attractive in that part of town was the one in the old garden at my uncle's place. All the young people of the family and the neighborhood congregated there. It was a secluded oblong of green sward, two sides shut in by trellises and close-clipped trees, one side open to the fountain and box-bordered hedges, and at the end towards the front, the fascinating summer house, vine-covered, a screaming eagle at the top, a marble table and iron chairs inside, where my uncle, shaded from the blazing sun, loved to sit and write.

They played with long-handled mallets in those days, which made the women look tall and dignified, not the club-footed things of modern years with which one must stoop ungracefully to get a shot. I do not know how many times a week they gathered there, nor how many years the custom lasted, but to me, a child, that croquet ground was a fashion pageant throughout my early years. There were hoop-skirts, bustles, chignons, hug-me-tights, sontags, Leghorn hats, all a good deal of a jumble to me — but that is the beauty of memoirs. You don't have to be too ac-

curate, they are only memoirs after all; if you wait long enough all the people who know more about things than you do will be dead — and the memories of a child are necessarily fleeting glimpses. The hoop-skirts passed by in varying styles, some of them bell-shaped, some just flaring; then there was the full skirt hanging limp with a Garibaldi waist, loose and comfortable, such as my sister wore as a 'flapper' of 1870.

There was also, evidently, such a thing as a hoop-skirt cover, which I only faintly remember, but to which my uncle referred as an everyday event. 'Mary Ellen is making a hoop-skirt cover,' he writes, 'and wants me to put in 100 or so eyelets, which I suppose I shall do. She made one when George Keyes was here and he put in the eyelets. I did not see him doing it till he had half of them done — and *then* I told him all he had put in would come out, he made the holes so large, so he put in the rest agreeable to my suggestions. Well, all he put in at first, came out accordingly, and those he put in under my instruction, stayed! So you see I am somebody yet!'

When the loose blouses turned suddenly into basques, there was a storm of criticism, I understand, and they must have indeed seemed immodest after years of dissimulation as to busts, hips, and contours generally.

There were bustles both then and later, and I remember my sister at the time when these excrescences were at their height complaining because, at the end of a two-mile walk up Pennsylvania Avenue, amid the élite of Washington life, she had discovered a torn and twisted letter reposing upon her bustle, dropped there by a brother as a parting touch as she had left the house!

Then there were chignons, and buns, and waterfalls,

cascades of curls down the back of the head, and bands of black velvet like stockades about the neck, and the older people all saying, 'Absurd — why will you make yourselves look like frights?' The chignons I remember as a special achievement. They were small things made of horsehair, round and rather flat like a bun, and one of the older girls would sit in front of the bureau, her hair drawn back and tied, this excrescence pinned into place, and the hair smoothed carefully, very carefully, over it — the smoother the hair, the more of a success the operation. As to the waterfalls, they were very beautiful, those soft fluffy curls, not too long; and now and then a girl would take one of them off and casually lay it aside by way of amusement for the boys, as did Miss Ethel Barrymore in 'Captain Jinks,' a good many years later.

And little bonnets like wreaths, higher in front above the forehead, and growing narrow back of the ears, and tied under the chin; and absurd little straw hats tilting forehead and kicking up in the back, the space in the rear filled in with loops of ribbon. And Leghorns, of course — Maud Müller hats, which seemed to come and go throughout my entire youth.

But the one thing amid all these changing fashions that remains the most vivid in my mind is the Grecian Bend. Of this I claim to be a connoisseur, for my aunt Sarita, my youthful aunt, being a young woman of marked personality, was nothing if not extreme. Other people wore them, of course, but it is hers that I see before me. She was a slight little creature with a beautiful figure. In the first place, her shoes, or, as we then called them, boots, were high-heeled, laced, with little tassels dangling at the top. The satin skirt almost to the boots was rather scant and in

broad stripes of purple and black. Over this were black satin panniers at the side, and four great puffs at the back tied in with whalebone hoops to keep them in place and make them stand out. How any one ever sat down in such a harness I do not remember! The black satin sleeves were long and tight, and the waist like a basque. Upon the head — at least upon my aunt's head — was a low Alpine hat, with a red plume going up the front, purling across the crown and down the back of the head, one small curl peeping out behind the ear, under the chignon.

Of course the art of the whole effect was what the wearer put into it. The body was held straight, tilted slightly forward, the head erect, elbows drawn in at the waist-line, hands held out in front, dropping sharply at the wrist so that they dangled, so to speak, when the owner moved.

There was no tea in those days, but the darkies brought out big glass pitchers of lemonade — those seething afternoons — and during the season big pails of cherries, great black cherries and red-and-white wax-hearts, which every one ate and survived, although my father called them 'cholera-parties.'

My uncle loved to sit in the summer house when he was not playing the game, and watch the young people. Sometimes his wife sat by him sewing, sometimes he wrote, and, upon a bench upon one side of the green, a little girl, too, loved to sit — they were a good deal alike in their childish hearts — her long legs in white stockings and ankle ties dangling almost to the ground, her hoop-skirt tilting about in every direction. At the neck of her loose Garibaldi waist was a tiny gold pin encircling the braided hair of some defunct ancestor, and made especially for her childish stature. Upon each side of her face were large flat curls that had

been moistened and brushed over somebody's finger. Her hands were clasped in her lap when they were not holding the recalcitrant hoop-skirt in place, her eyes glued upon the passing show!

The wonderful clothes, the flitting figures of her grown-up friends enthralled her. It seemed to her, especially during the 'Bend' period, the acme of all the fashions of the world. In later years, many, many years later, when she shuts her eyes and thinks about it, the exaggerated figures darting about, stooping, bending, hopping after the little balls — it seems to her a good deal like a garden party of well-dressed kangaroos! as the brothers were inclined to call them.

When I was about ten years old, this dear uncle died, and I must have grieved for him, his death must have been a great loss in my life, but the thing that I remember best about it was the magnificence of his funeral — the greatest, I have been told, except Lincoln's, that was ever held in Washington. He was very high up as a Grand Master Mason — the thirty-third degree — besides being a public man. My mind is a jumble of bands and soldiers and police and regalia, of crowds in front of the house, and surging crowds in the streets. All Capitol Hill, I believe, and a large part of Washington turned out.

The scene must have been impressive, aside from the fact that I was but ten years old, an impressionable age. The ceremonies at the house and at the church over, we did not reach the cemetery until seven o'clock. From the entrance to the grave, a distance of perhaps two city blocks, was a line of Masons, three deep, their heads uncovered, their great plumed hats in their hands, their or-

ders, their swords unsheathed, and at the far end a group of people standing about the open grave with bowed heads, the whole scene lighted by candlelight. The mournful music, the fitful flickering of lights, the pervasive sense of mystery, the minister's solitary voice breaking the great silence!

This I only half remember, but the picture stays with me — the crowded streets from the City Hall up Capitol Hill, and out to the cemetery, two miles of impenetrable human beings, and of little me, sitting very still in the first carriage, my hand clasped in the hand of my aunt, my white dress and Leghorn hat — this time with black band and black streamers — watching them close to the carriage window, and wondering if they knew who I was and what an important part I was of the programme! And such is the gratitude of childhood!

CHAPTER IV

CONVENT AND CONCORD

GOOD-BYE to my childhood! At fourteen, I went away to school at the Convent of the Visitation at Georgetown, where my mother, my aunt, and an older sister had been before me, and where at the time lived, as a nun, a cousin of my mother, Sister Mary Blandina.

My girlhood, as I look back upon it, seems to have consisted chiefly of my life at the convent, or in Concord, Massachusetts, where I visited the summer of my nineteenth year. I had been there once or twice as a child, but it was in this later and longer visit that I came to know this wonderful place and remember it.

Those years at the convent were very like the years of most young girls at school, or at least at convent schools, very vital to me, but certainly of no universal interest. I loved the nuns and I loved Catholicism, as I saw it there in all its simple beauty, American nuns, American character, which I suppose I understood. Later, when I went to Rome and saw churchmen in their gorgeous robes talking frankly about the temporal power of the Pope, I was shocked. The very suggestion of an idea that any one could in this late day of the world's history consider a possibility of religious domination was something that quite took away from the charm which Catholicism in America, or at least among my American friends, had held for me. I felt as if I wanted to go right back to my convent and tell those dear unworldly nuns about it. I knew they would dislike it quite as much as I.

They were, many of them, charming women, as different in character and type as were my friends of the world: lovely Sister Loyola, who seemed to be always kneeling around on some stairway, on some gallery before a picture or a statue, her delicate inspired face uplifted looking like a Fra-Angelico angel, only much more beautiful. We used to tease her — she was only a young girl like ourselves — and tell her that she did it because she knew how lovely she looked; but we knew at the time that this was not so, for she was a radiant, joyous, inspired kind of saint.

I was at the convent at the time that this Sister Loyola took the black veil, the only ceremony of the kind which I ever remember seeing. She had been there among us wearing a white veil for many months — I have forgotten how long is the novitiate; but we had known and seen her daily, and had admired her for a long time, and it made the ceremony all the more poignant to see this young woman, our friend, so suddenly shut away from us.

We all knelt in our little chapel, row after row of girls in white veils, the altar ablaze with candles, the priests moving about in their gorgeous robes, and behind the great grill, which filled, as I recall it, the whole left side of the altar, and back of it the little black figure of the nun. I do not remember the details of the ceremony, but it is still a vivid, almost tragic picture in my mind: the small kneeling figure, the long dark tresses cut off and laid aside, the dark boyish head, and in the background the rows of kneeling nuns, chanting, chanting — going on and on, stopping and going on again, that weird monotonous music floating up from the kneeling figures, drifting about the small young novice, enveloping her, as if, it seemed to me, those weird chanting notes were casting some incantation about her,

THE LINCOLN STATUE IN THE MEMORIAL AT WASHINGTON

drawing out, from the very depths of her, all that was human, and vital, and womanly.

Sister Fidelis, the other nun whom I loved best, was of an entirely different type; intellectual, witty, practical, so practical that we girls used to say to her sometimes, 'Oh, Sister, you are not the least bit like a nun.'

'Sh! Sh!' she would admonish us, trying to keep her eyes from twinkling, 'that's no compliment. I *want* to be like a nun,' ignoring our further comment — 'Well, you're not, even if you do try.'

It was she also who used to warn us, 'It's all very well, my dears, but, if there were a novitiate to matrimony as there is to the religious life, there would be as few brides as there are nuns.'

When I was about sixteen, my cousin Dan came home from Europe and came with my young aunt Sarita to see me. I remember it perfectly, the first time I definitely remember him, in that square box of a convent parlor, the high room painted a gloomy brown, with horsehair furniture, and one entire side a square lattice, through which now and then a nun was permitted to talk to a friend. Dan was twenty-six, and, I thought, very handsome. It was romantic to tell to my school fellows of this new cousin, a sculptor — an unknown quantity in those days in Washington — who had lived abroad. He had just come back from his studies in Mr. Ball's studio in Florence, and spent the next two winters in Washington, where, though I saw him little, he brought a new and artistic touch into my life.

When I read of Raphael, 'whom the Gods loved and whom women loved,' I have often thought that *my* artist

was at least born with a golden spoon in his mouth. Of sturdy New England stock, a race of lawyers back of him, with an intellectual environment certainly unequalled in American life, Dan French seems never to have encountered the struggles of poverty and misunderstanding which have been considered — which he theoretically considered — as necessary to the development of genius.

His father was a judge, his two grandfathers were lawyers — one of them Chief Justice of the State of New Hampshire — while his life, during the most crucial years, was spent amid the 'high thinking and plain living' of Old Concord.

It was a simple and interesting life when I came to know it a few years later, but just before that time, while he was growing up, while his first statue, the 'Minute Man,' was coming into life, and during his two years in Italy in the studio of Mr. Ball, it must have been, as I gather from his father's letters, filled with an atmosphere of high purpose that was unusual as well as of great intellectual interest.

There was at that time in New England but little art — as art — but there was a love, as represented in old prints and engravings, a reverence for old furniture and for all inherited worth, that was at least appreciative.

In Concord there was small need of money, small ambition for purely worldly success, and Dan French, with an absorbing interest in the worth-while things of life, cared little, even at that period, for aught save to be left alone to work out his newly discovered vision of art.

His father wrote often for the magazines, was a man of literary attainments, and welcomed eagerly the first glimpse of anything like genius in his children. His family, who had probably never seen a sculptor in their lives, were

amazed and interested, and his fellow townspeople, contrary to the old adage that a prophet is never honored in his own country, immediately decided that something like a miracle had happened in their midst, that this young product of their beloved town was going to be the greatest sculptor of all ages.

When it was finally decided that he was to go abroad to pursue his studies, Miss Lucy Barrett tells how she was busying herself one morning in the dining-room, preparatory to breakfast, when the milkman drove up to the kitchen door.

'Hello,' he cried — he was probably her friend, for all classes were friends in those days in Concord — and, as she hurried to the window, 'Heard the news? You'll be interested. Dan French is going to Europe, going down to Italy — to be an artist.'

How could any young worker fail to 'carry on,' followed thus by the sympathy and understanding of his townspeople?

Many of his neighbors, naturally enough, knew nothing whatever as to sculpture or of any art, but their interest was undoubted. One of them, a carpenter who had made a pedestal for him, took great pride in what he was doing, especially in the fact that he was working for and with his talented young fellow townsman. After he had brought it to the studio, and placed upon it the marble head of the woman for which it had been made, he seemed greatly impressed with the success of his achievement, stood off and admired it, and finally said, 'Well, you know, I must admit that that head does kind of set off the pedestal — fine!'

And another one decided, after careful consideration of a

canine group just finished, that it did 'look considerable *like* a dog, you know.'

But the greatest assistance of any neighboring friend came to Mr. Potter — Mr. Edward C. Potter — who at his studio in Enfield was working upon the horse for the equestrian statue which he and Mr. French afterwards set up in Paris. One of his neighbors came in to see it and was greatly interested. He came a number of times, studied it from different angles, and finally, one day, he made a speech.

'That's a fine horse,' he meditated, 'a fine horse. And it looks a good deal *like* a horse. There's only one thing about it, that — well, could be improved. It needs something and I really believe I could help you. You see, it's this way. I used to be a taxidermist, and I got a whole box of glass eyes left over down to my place, and, if you'd let me, I'd bring up a couple and just slip 'em in, and you don't know how it would improve that horse. Why, it would make him look as if he was alive!'

The first story that I remember of Dan French's coming to the surface was when he was perhaps seventeen years of age. It has been told many times in print, sometimes rather to his distaste, but it is certainly a part of his youth and has its place. He and a group of young people — my sister, my cousins, and others of the neighborhood — were seated before the fire telling stories and diverting themselves by eating raw turnips. Dan amused himself by carving his turnip into a statuette of a frog, 'the frog that would awooing go,' in frock coat, etc. The young people were amused and interested, and finally his mother exclaimed, 'Why, Dan, you're a genius! There's a real likeness in that.'

At that time there was no art school or art class in Boston, but he frequented the Athenæum and studied the Greek casts there, modelled for a short time with J. Q. A. Ward in New York, and for a while in Boston with Dr. Rimmer, whose recognition as a sculptor, he always claimed, was not commensurate with his achievements. Rimmer was a very great draughtsman, and to him in after years Mr. French attributed the solid foundation of his work. Miss May Alcott, who had recently come back from her studies in Europe, did much to help him, both with her sympathy and with her tools. There was probably not a shop in Boston which at that time would have known what a sculptor's tool meant.

'Father talked to May Alcott about my newly developed interest in sculpture,' I have heard Dan tell many times in later life, 'and she said, "If he will come down to see me, I will lend him some tools." I tell you I lost no time. I harnessed old Bucephalus, hurried down to the other end of the town, learned what I could in a short call, and brought a handful of tools back in triumph. One of these crude wooden implements I have always by me and am using it to this day.'

When it was decided that he was to go to Italy to study, people often asked why he went to Florence instead of to Paris, and I have heard him answer that Italy had happened to come his way, but that he had always wished that he could have gone to Paris and to the schools there earlier than he did, which was some ten years later.

'Would it have been better if you had gone to Paris?' I have heard people ask him, and his answer has been that that was a question that was hard to be sure of, that, if a man succeeded pretty well in life, it was probable that the

things that had come to him were the things that were best for his development.

The winter before, he had come to know, in Boston, young Preston Powers, the son of Hiram Powers, whose 'Greek Slave' had just made a triumphant pilgrimage through the country. When the two young men had first talked about Italy, Preston said, 'Come over to Florence and live with us,' and young French, in the easy-going spirit in which the invitation was offered, accepted. It was only years afterwards, when the Powers family had adopted him into the family circle, that he discovered that Preston's wife and mother-in-law had been quite overwhelmed at the idea of an unknown American coming to settle down indefinitely in their household.

Our family were always great letter-writers. They seemed to pour out their ideas, their comments, their news of the day to each other, in whatever part of the globe they found themselves, and it is through these letters of Judge French to his son in Italy that we gather much of the atmosphere of the Concord of those days.

Judge French's letters to his son, and all through those of a longer period to his brother in Washington, even though full of the troubles and tragedies of family life and the gravity of public problems, are pervaded, as was his conversation, by an undercurrent of rippling humor, as if each little episode would yield its incongruity if you just looked at it long enough and steadily enough. The glimpse of such little incongruities seemed to greatly please him, and I think these anecdotes of Judge French are interesting as part of the background of a sculptor.

Once, when addressing a distinguished audience, his memory suddenly failed him. He said, afterwards, that

almost in the middle of a sentence he was conscious that his mind was suddenly a blank. For the life of him, he couldn't remember what he had said, or what he wanted to say, in fact what it was he was talking about. He knew he must say something, and so he leaned forward and smiled down at the listening front row.

'Will one of you gentlemen,' he asked confidingly, 'be good enough to tell me just what my last sentence was?' After a moment's suspense, one of the men repeated the sentence, I have quite forgotten what it was all about, and Judge French took it up and went on with it, as if nothing had happened.

At another time, when he was a younger man — we always loved these stories in the family — he tried a case in court, which he won, and about a year later he found himself trying a very similar case before the same judge, but on this occasion he was on the other side. In the midst of his discourse he was rather appalled to find that he was trying to convince the jury of almost exactly the opposite of what he had preached in the same room the year before.

And presently the storm broke. 'Mr. French,' said the judge very seriously, although the question at issue was not one of life and death, 'I happen to recall that about a year ago you made a most eloquent appeal in an almost identical case, which I believe you won. Your eloquence at that time was absolutely on the other side. At that time you insisted upon a man's guilt, drawn from certain evident deductions. Now you insist upon a man's innocence, by means, if I remember aright, of almost the same deductions. How do you account for this unexpected change of base?'

Every one waited for the discomfiture of the young lawyer for the defence.

'Well, your Honor,' said Mr. French as seriously as he could bring himself to speak, 'you see, your Honor, last year, I *thought* I was right. This year, I've had a whole year in which to learn — this year, I *know* I'm right.'

The first letter that the father ever wrote the son, at least after he had grown up, was written while the latter was on the steamer going away from home, and was filled with advice of a most tender and sympathetic tone.

'A cheap commodity,' he calls it, 'with which I have not often burdened you. You carry with you a great part of my life and hope.' And later, 'I have never felt any serious uneasiness about you, on sea or on land. I am sure you will have good luck and a good time.'

I don't know whether it was in this letter to his son that Judge French made the inimitable suggestion that 'a man might as well lead his own life, that he might as well be a warning to his son, as an example. Certainly easier and possibly quite as effective.'

Again, he writes on fame: 'To strive for fame and get nothing, is failure, but to strive for fame, though one miss it and yet gain wherewith to maintain one's self-respect and wife and children, is as near success as one need hope to attain in this world of disappointment. I have observed always that at these unveilings the artist is usually overlooked. The man who pays him is prominent, and the foundryman who casts the figure is immortalized on the base. What is the story of him who invented music, and returned after many years to his native city to find a celebration of his music by a great procession, and was stoned to death because he claimed to be himself?'

Their own household must have been an inspiring place to any one interested in intellectual diversions. His father

was a humorist of the most humorous kind; his mother handsome, brilliant, and entertaining; and always interesting people in and out of the house. James G. Blaine, probably the most talked-about man in America at that time, was his intimate friend; Miss Dodge, or Gail Hamilton (Mrs. Blaine's cousin) — it was the fashion at that time to write under a *nom de plume* — was one of their frequent guests, a well-known writer and a brilliant conversationalist; President Eliot, who had married Mrs. French's niece, were all intimates of the house; and with the choice minds of Concord to draw upon, Dan used to say that their dinner table was like fireworks.

Miss Harriet Preston seems almost to have lived with them during the years of Dan's sojourn in Europe. His brother Will living in Chicago, his two sisters married, the older people would, otherwise, have been much alone. When I first saw Miss Preston, years later, she was a dignified blonde woman of soft charm. In the early days she must have been quite lovely. She was a poet, a Greek scholar, and a great student. Mr. Sanborn speaks of her as one of the best of American poets, but she was more than that.

Judge French writes: 'Miss Preston is fine. She has a new edition of Virgil in three octavo vols. and reads herself to sleep with it, comparing it with two other editions and reading all the notes. And yet' — what probably even more appealed to him — 'she is a "languid blonde" as soft as silk, and takes a full hour to dress in the morning.'

These letters, during this period, are full of the utmost sympathy and enthusiasm. 'Our statue,' he always wrote; 'and we will get them to understand if we stick to it,' and all kinds of comments and accounts as the time of the un-

veiling drew near. 'They haggle so over details, etc., but it will come out well in the end.'

There seems to have been, in this case, one person who made objections, and it is interesting to note that Judge Hoar immediately put him in his place, that the meeting applauded, and it is also interesting to find Mr. Emerson taking his share in the small affairs of the town with his usual calm love of justice. 'If I ask an artist,' he said, 'to make a silver bowl, and he gives me one of gold, I must not haggle over details.'

There is a good deal of badinage largely about girls. 'May Alcott,' he writes, 'has started an art class down in the town. The girls go and draw and are interested in what she has to give them, fresh from Paris. "If I only had Dan French to help me," she says, "every young woman in Middlesex County would be studying art!"'

Also — still badinage — a great deal in the way of advice and suggestions in regard to a young woman whose name must have often appeared in the pages of Dan's letters from Florence. 'Is Miss Lizzie Ball as pretty as you think she is? Is she really a blonde, and haven't you her photograph to send us? Why don't you hurry up? But perhaps she wouldn't like our cold winters.'

Of course everybody insisted, both in Concord and indeed in the little circle outside the Porta Romana, that these two people, who were together daily, must sooner or later fall in love. They became lifelong friends, and have often laughed about it since.

'Trying to work me up,' Dan used to say, 'and by the time I had really got into a sentimental state, in the moonlight, I discovered that my fair friend was picking out the letters in the Cassiopeia Chair, because they spelled "W,"

which was the first letter in the name "Will," the handsome young Southern sculptor who had got very far ahead of me.'

There was news and gossip of what Miss Ellen Emerson called 'history and biography.' 'The Putnams are going to get a divorce and the town is greatly agitated about it, as to who shall have the baby. It seems they both want it' — those things were not so stereotyped in those days as they are now; and Judge French's suggestion was a good one that 'they might as well put it off long enough to have another so they could divide up even.'

Again he writes: 'Pamela [his wife] claimed that our side of the house was noisy and went over to sleep in your empty room. In the night she had what she called a bad dream, but what we suspect was a nightmare, and raised the house, and I had to go in, and as politely as possible, shake her. She has now returned to my room so as to have some one on the job early in the process.'

There are lots of little touches in the letters which show that Concord was very much like other small towns in its everyday life. 'Poor Parson B —— forgot a funeral, a few days ago. Old Miss Ball, next the brick engine house, eighty years old, and a chronic member of the church, died, and wanted to be buried. She waited an hour and then sent for Mr. B ——, who, it seems, was at West Concord making calls. They finally got an old minister, a Mr. Grant, who did his best, but was obliged, for want of knowledge of the spinster's family, to pray for the grandchildren — and then, recovering, floundered along — "if such there *be*." The hearse and the coaches had got tired of waiting, and had gone off and put up their horses, and Judge Brooks, who had charge of the affair, said, "it did seem as if the

Devil had got into that funeral." Mr. B —— came at last, but what could he say, he had just forgotten it.'

Sometimes they went to the Old Manse to hear a translation from some classic author. There were six women present who could read it in the original. Sometimes they went to the Alcotts' of an evening to one of the famous 'conversations,' interesting, but 'a good deal like the Irishman's reciprocity, the conversation being all on one side — that is, Alcott did all the talking'; but they were an institution in Concord, and Judge French always went and enjoyed them.

At another time, at the same place, they gathered to form a literary club, 'oddish folks,' the letter says, 'a sort of literary farmers' association, essays, conversations, *no victuals*, so it will never last.' On the whole, he seemed to admire Alcott as did many others, notably Emerson. 'I feel,' he says in one of his letters, 'as if Concord people sometimes underestimated him. He is extraordinary. His remark about his daughter's age is worthy of Plato.' Someone had apparently asked Alcott how old was Miss Louisa, and his answer had been, 'She has passed that age beyond which a woman never goes.'

To continue, from the letters: 'Last night we attended a conversation at Mr. Emerson's house. Rather dull! *I* said one good thing. Mr. Alcott went on and on and on, with his eyes shut as is his habit, enlarging upon the wonderful influence of music, the mother's lullaby, etc., etc. I told him, by way of variety, that I knew a man whose mother used to sing him to sleep when a baby, and he said he used to pretend to be asleep so as to escape the horrid noise.'

Which reminds me of another occasion when Judge

French diverted the solemn discussion into a lighter channel. Mr. Alcott and Mr. B——, the minister, seemed to have had some discussion as to children's souls. Mr. Alcott thought that children were born of the earth and later developed. At this, Mr. B.——, being a churchman, took umbrage. He maintained that children were always born of the spirit. They became somewhat excited, Mr. Alcott explaining long-windedly his point, Mr. B—— becoming more and more absorbed in his subject, and finally Mr. Alcott apologized, in his gentle, dreamy way, and said that he was sorry that any animosity should have crept into their discussion; he had only meant to say that children were potential angels. At this, Judge French came to the rescue. He remarked that he had always noticed that in your own family children *were* potential angels, but in other families, they were likely to be potential devils.

A year before the town of Concord had decided to erect a statue of a minute man on the battle-field by the 'rude bridge that arched the flood.' The Commission appropriated one thousand dollars, and had unofficially asked Dan French, at that time twenty-one, to make the statue. The tradition in the family is that he made a sketch and took it down to Mr. Emerson and Judge Hoar, upon whose recommendation it was immediately accepted.

Of course this commission was a serious thing for a youth whose only training had been one month in the studio of Mr. Ward in New York, some lessons in drawing with Dr. Rimmer in Brookline, a prize in the cattle show the year before, and some advice from Miss May Alcott.

'I wonder whether I can do it,' he writes to some one. 'By this time next year I shall know.'

And also his father's advice, 'Go ahead, if you can't do it, I can show you.'

He made his models, the second and final one in a room in a business building in Boston, with a poor light. He still wonders how he was able to do it.

There was no one except a stray sculptor at that time who knew anything about the mechanics of the trade, so he and his father went to work, and his practical mechanical instinct carried him through, though with various catastrophes.

When his first model was finished, they got the plaster ready — the amount which some one told him would be sufficient — made their mould, dissolved the plaster, stood the model on its head, and poured the molten plaster into it. There must have been a hole somewhere, underneath the hair, perhaps, for all the plaster ran through the mould and out upon the floor — the last drop they had — so they had to wait for another day when they could renew their supply.

I don't remember whether it was the 'Minute Man' or whether it was a bust made about the same time which gave him great trouble as to the hair. They tried in every way to make it have a natural look, and finally his father said, 'Oh, take a brush and comb, and treat it the way you would treat hair, and I guess it will look like hair.'

These early days, when the young sculptor was trying to work out his problems without any of the art classes which in this age would pursue him, his struggles must have been of great interest and amusement to his family.

When they tried to carry the bust of his father downstairs — he having made it in his room — no one knew how to manage it. His sister tells how the family all col-

THE CONCORD MINUTE MAN

lected, called in the farmer, grouped themselves about the hallway and the staircase, reached through the banister railings and tried to push it, to ease it, and to hold it back, which they finally achieved without breaking its nose or crushing their own feet.

And also how they sat around the fire in the evening, and Dan — this was during his studies with Dr. Rimmer — tried to show them what he had learned during the day. In an appreciative attitude of mind they all tried to copy what he was doing, and his father admitted that, while Dan's showed no great genius, it was better than his or Pamela's.

He went to Italy, and his father writes him, 'The great event is here, the unveiling of the statue. I'm disappointed that you are not coming. Hurry up with the old image [the 'Endymion']; nobody will know if it is right or wrong, and we want to see you.'

On the 11th he writes: 'A perfect spring morning. The sun is bright and the air still, and the bluebirds and robins are talking very busily about their nests — and the coming 19th of April. . . . The old Minute Man does us credit. He was bare from Friday till Monday, and since Monday is covered. I examined him twice in the rain, and I think he stands pretty nearly straight, though I did not test him with a plumb. Your letter about that arrived too late, but I shall see to it and, if anybody criticises the pose, I shall show them why. But never fear, everybody, great and small, is delighted. He looks large enough for out-of-doors, and I think is as nice as in his native clay. I confess to a great thrill at the sight of D. C. French's name on the base. . . .

'The little Keyes twins visited him and acted quite

shyly. When they got home, one of them said, "We didn't like him. He scowled so, and he had a gun, and we thought he was going to shoot us!"...

'Our house will be decorated, as perhaps the whole town will be. It will be a great day for you, and I think of you constantly and of your angel Mother who would so rejoice and perhaps *does* rejoice, with me over our little Dan.' (They always called him 'little Dan' in the family.)

'The President is coming with most of his Cabinet, the Marine Band from Washington, and Lowell and Longfellow and Emerson in the procession — and the devil to pay generally.'

The morning was bitter cold, but there were said to be five thousand people at the celebration, guests of the town, and the whole place was turned upside down. There were bands and marching and speech-making. President Grant was there, and his Cabinet. George William Curtis was the orator of the day, and spoke for two mortal hours in the cold. They must all have been icicles. Somebody said that more people died of the weather on that day than had died in the battle which they were celebrating.

One little incident there was that stirred up a mild hornet's nest — not a difficult thing to do in Concord at any time. Miss Louisa Alcott climbed up upon the platform with several friends, and asked eagerly of Judge Hoar, 'Where can we sit?'

Judge Hoar, hurried and harassed, probably, and not used at that time to the women playing a conspicuous place in celebrations, answered concisely, 'Anywhere in the town of Concord, Miss Alcott, except upon this platform.'

Of course this made everybody mad with everybody else. The next Sunday, coming out of church, Miss Eliza-

beth Hoar stopped and said to Judge French, 'Everybody is praising your son, and everybody is abusing my brother.'

Of course George William Curtis said many beautiful things, and I recall one of his encouraging sentences in his speech of that day, which may seem more beautiful to read about here than to have listened to with shivering limbs and chattering teeth, on that glorious afternoon:

'We get together, go over these old stories, of the settlement of the town, of the Revolutionary battle, of the valor and the patriotism of our fathers, these well-worn tales. Happy the people whose commonplaces are such as these.'

Judge French writes: 'I rode in the first carriage, representing you, with Judge Hoar; Emerson and Lowell, George William Curtis and Blaine, in the next. Was there ever such an occasion for an unveiling of a statue? In fact, Blaine says it seems as if the whole celebration was got up just to honor you.'

'In the midst of the ceremonies' — still from the letters — 'in front of the statue, in the midst of Parson Reynolds's prayer, the seat with the President and Secretaries gave way and settled a few inches. The minister paused, trusted in the Lord, and went on. After a spell, it settled again, but no one was hurt, and they pulled themselves together and seemed not to mind; and the third time, during Curtis's oration. But there was the beautiful outlook and the military music, and Emerson's inspiring words. And nobody seemed to pay much attention to a President and some Secretaries being jolted a few inches.'

In the evening there was a big dinner at Judge Hoar's: Grant and his Cabinet; Judge French and his house guests; James G. Blaine and Mrs. Blaine; Gail Hamilton; Senator Morrill; George William Curtis, and of course the other

shining lights of the town. A great ball at night where the girls all wore Colonial dresses, and the father spent most of the evening receiving congratulations about the son.

After the celebration, Judge French devoted a good deal of his time to looking after the interests of the absent artist. Small models were made of the 'Minute Man' many of which were sold, and to these he always referred as 'The Minuettes.'

The small group of 'Owls making love' had also been put on the market, but I think Dan had seen to that before he sailed. He took the small model to some firm in Boston, who bought it, as I remember, for fifty dollars. They had it cast in 'Parian marble' with a match-box at the back, and they must have made endless money out of it, though none of this ever came to the sculptor.

His father writes to him about all kinds of things, quite frankly about money, but only in the most friendly way. There could not have been much money in the French household at that time, for Judge French had obligations in many directions. But then no one in Concord ever cared much about money, or thought it good taste to talk about it, and Dan French, who seemed, with no great effort, always to land in comfortable surroundings, gave it as little thought as did the rest. The few people in Concord who had much in the way of worldly goods adapted themselves to their less successful neighbors and would have thought it unwise to do anything simply for show.

There is much in the letters, at this time, in regard to Blaine with whom Judge French seems to have always been in touch. 'Blaine is a wag,' he writes. 'He has been off on a Presidential campaign, and some one suggested that it must have been rather a bore to be dragged around

the country with the President and Cabinet. "Well," said Blaine, "that reminds me of a man who was going to Chicago, about a hundred miles, and he bought a drove of hogs, drove them in, sold them, and only got as much as he had paid for them. Some one said to him, 'It seems to me you must have had a pretty hard journey for your money.' 'Oh, no,' drawled the farmer, 'it might have been, but you see I had the society — of — the — hogs.'"'

This became in our family a by-word. There was always some story, some futile undertaking which would have been desolate enough, but for 'the society of the hogs.'

And then Blaine's defeat! He had, apparently, been sure of success, and from his popularity, his hopes, it would seem to have been justified, but it happened, in this case as it often does, that the big man, the prominent man, stepped aside for the dark horse.

It must have been a terrible blow to him, and Judge French felt that it did much to undermine his health. Mrs. Blaine, as I remember her, was a handsome woman with white hair piled high, and would have given great dignity to the White House; while Miss Dodge, her cousin, would undoubtedly have gone down in history as the most brilliant conversationalist of her time.

Of course Judge French was always a farmer, in a way, and loved the farm. In fact, all the years of his sojourn in Washington, he ran it scientifically from a distance, and, what was more unusual, made it pay. He used to go home early and enjoy looking after things, and sometimes, in asparagus season — that and the milk were the two great products — when it had to be cut and hurried off in great quantities to Boston, it was impossible to get temporary

help and the whole family used to go into the barn and tie up the packages. This, I believe, my husband thought deadly uninteresting. But they all helped, and Miss Preston, the pretty young Greek scholar, also, much to the amusement of Judge French, who liked to have her there, rather because she was pretty than because she was a scholar or of any real help.

And always the humorous touches which he loved. 'I played a cute little trick on the cows yesterday. They have a trying way of bolting through the rather handsome hedge down by the road, and at times tearing it badly, so I bethought myself of something that would stop them. I stretched two wires well in among the leaves, just where they would catch them midway in their flight, and I lay awake at night laughing to myself, thinking of their surprise and disappointment the next time they wanted to take a little jaunt down the road.'

The constant references to Emerson make us feel very near the great philosopher in his everyday life. 'John Keyes says he has a fine photograph of Mr. Emerson and Edward and the new baby. You will surely want one.'

'Annie Keyes's engagement has just been announced to Edward' — Edward Emerson, the son of Ralph Waldo Emerson — thus his sister writes to him. 'And she has a diamond ring, a diamond set in black enamel. It was given to Mrs. Emerson by her husband when they were first married — not an engagement ring — and she says she has saved it all these years for Edward's beloved.'

Also a very casual remark: 'Our friend Morrill has been appointed Secretary of the Treasury,' of more consequence than it sounded to the writer or to the reader.

Then the time arrived when the young artist was to come home, and his father's letters are full of advice to him, to travel about a little — which travels seemed to consist of a short tour of Europe — while he still had the time and money. 'We have heard,' he writes, 'that you will arrive on a Saturday, and we shall be there and look sharp after you, you may be sure.'

But in the interval, unexpected events had happened. As the father had written, Morrill had been appointed Secretary of the Treasury. I was in Washington at that time and remember what went on at the Washington end. Mr. Morrill, as soon as he was sworn into office, telegraphed to Judge French asking him to come on and be Assistant Secretary. The latter said, afterwards, that the idea appealed to him from the first. He was a little tired of commuting to Boston and of the busy court life of his younger days, and the kind of legal work connected with the Government seemed to be just the kind of work he would like to do. At first thought, however, it also seemed quite impossible to give up his established law practice in Boston, and he wired Secretary Morrill to that effect. I remember, as a young girl, it quite appealed to me, Mr. Morrill's telegram back, 'I can take no refusal, I need you, and the country needs you'; and apparently the temptation was too great for Judge French. His family and his friends evidently thought that it would be just the change of work that was suited to him, even if it only lasted a year or two.

He came on almost immediately, and it must have seemed strange, as I know it seemed very agreeable, to find himself, after years of farming in Concord and of busy law work in Boston, spending his days in that large room in the

Treasury Department looking out over the great flats with the Washington Monument in their midst, and the river beyond, with some one to wait upon him at every turn, and to revel in the kind of law which he loved.

There he stayed ten years through various administrations, and recommended, as he writes in one of his letters, 'by four successive ex-Secretaries, Morrill, Sherman, Boutwell, and Windom, without the asking from me.'

He and Secretary Morrill were great friends, and some one in the household named two little kittens for them — Lot and Henry. They always went by their names, the first names of the two Secretaries, and there was a good deal of joking as to its indiscriminate application. This, Mary, the pretty Irish housemaid, thought disrespectful, and addressed them always as 'Master Lot' and 'Master Henry,' and when one of them died, Judge French sent the absent Secretary an official letter, upon official paper, announcing the sad event.

Finally, when the wandering son arrived — I have often heard him speak of it — when his ship arrived outside of Boston where they stopped for the mail, he and the other passengers were interested in the antics of a government boat with flags flying, which seemed to be waiting for them.

An officer came aboard and asked for Mr. Daniel C. French. I think the struggling young artist must have thought he was going to be arrested, but the very dapper young officer assured him that his father had suddenly launched out into public life, and with a party of friends had come down in a government boat to welcome him.

CHAPTER V

STUDENT DAYS

WHILE the father in Concord was looking after his boy's interests at home, the son over in Florence, where his good luck seemed to pursue him, was trying not to have too good a time.

'They all do everything they can to make me happy,' he writes. 'They not only treat me like one of the family, but they take me about to see everything and everybody — such interesting people!'

He lived in Preston Powers's family, and within a few days of his arrival, he and Mrs. Powers, a young girl of twenty or twenty-one, went out in search of a room which would be suitable for a studio. They found one quite near the Porta Romana, outside which dwelt the numerous families of Powers, and Mr. Thomas Ball, at that time the most distinguished American sculptor as well as a man of a most wonderful personality.

The patriarchal family of 'Powers' lived in half a dozen houses, a little nest of beautiful villas outside, as I have said, of the great Roman Gate. Here was Preston, who was making quite a success of portrait busts, and his wife; Longworth in another villa with his family; Ned; Mrs. Ibbetson, who had been the beautiful Luly Powers, married to an Englishman of wealth and settled in a magnificent marble house. And here was Mr. Ball's large brown structure, in the middle of Italian gardens, a coterie where congregated the literati, the musicians, the artists from America and England, and from the neighboring Florence, de-

lightful surroundings for a young man who had led such a quiet though interesting life, in a small town in America.

For this room, his first studio, Mr. French paid six dollars a month, but, before he had worked there many days, he received a note from Mr. Ball asking him to come and work with him in the great studio which occupied a large part of the lower floor of his villa. Of this, he naturally writes home to his father with the greatest enthusiasm. To the youth just starting out in his artistic career, it seemed incredible that such good luck could have come to him.

Judge French wrote to Mr. Ball in regard to this very practical honor which he had conferred upon his son, and received in return a letter full of such kindliness and humor, that it remains a treasured memory in our family:

Hon. Henry F. French.

My dear Sir:

You would like to know why I have done this thing. I would ask you why the hearts and homes of the entire neighborhood were thrown open to your son before he had been here a week? Why do all the mothers (five at least), if he happens to be unwell, vie with each other in their endeavors to make him enjoy it? Why did I, when I went from curiosity, to see his 'Minute Man,' notwithstanding its surprising merit for a first work, find myself when I left the studio, thinking much more about the artist than the statue? And why did I go again and take my wife to see — the artist?

As far as I am concerned, I will tell you, I recognized in his simple, ingenuous, artist nature, something more than talent; something indispensable to a true artist. And when he came here and took a studio not far from me, but too far for me to see him as often as was good for him, I thought how, twenty years ago, I came here to make my first struggle, and how welcome was the face of dear old Powers whenever it brightened my door. And then — well, to come to the selfish part of it, I thought how nice it would be, when I was up to my elbows in clay, on a ladder

DAN FRENCH WITH THOMAS BALL AND HIS FAMILY IN FLORENCE

15 feet in the air, to have someone that I could call upon to receive my visitors; and I decided at once to give him a corner in my studio and invited him forthwith. I find it works well, with perhaps a few objections, for instance: when I hear fresh youthful *female* voices in the next room, I descend from my elevation, wash my hands and am ready to receive them when they get around to where I am. But I am oftentimes sadly disgusted at the indifference shown by a bevy of pretty girls to the head of the establishment, when that son of yours is beaming round on the other side of them.

I say nothing, but go quietly up my ladder again to work, leaving him to his fate. However, as there is said to be safety in numbers, you need have no fears for him, as *that* class of my visitors has increased wonderfully since he has been with me. And if he does not try my patience *too* severely in the above manner, he can stay as long as he pleases. As to the place where he sleeps and takes his meals; if you could see the devotion of that little Mrs. Preston Powers — well, you would like to be in his place if you were away from home. As that is about all I know about the case, I suppose I may sit down.

Believe me, my dear sir, it will always give me pleasure to do anything in my power to advance the professional interests of your son.

Very truly yours

THOMAS BALL

When I began to look over the letters of the family, I asked my husband for his diary, some of which had been kept in Florence, some in Concord, which I had seen only years before, and only in glimpses. Two or three times later I asked for it, and one day he brought me a few pages covered with extracts.

'Here is the best part of the diary,' he said.

'Where is the whole of it?' I asked, somewhat agitated.

'I tore that up,' he admitted, and to my astonished inquiries, his answer was, 'Well, as I looked it over, I decided that my mind was quite made up, that I didn't want any

one to read it, and the best thing to do was to dispose of it while there was no room for discussion.'

Some one who was present remarked, 'It must have been lurid, if you were afraid to have any one see it.'

'On the contrary,' said Mr. French, 'It was just the opposite of lurid. It was so exceedingly innocent that I made up my mind it should never see the light.'

And so that was the end of his diary. But the letters, I think, even though youthful and possibly innocent, are more or less interesting as showing the life of an American youth in the artistic surroundings of the Florence of 1875.

The evening of his arrival, Preston Powers met him at the station and drove him across the city, and out through the Porta Romana to their little American colony where he was to live. He was frankly disappointed with the beautiful city of Florence about which he had heard so much. He had doubtless expected it to look like Paris, and instead, at that time, he saw dirty streets, few lights, and circuitous turns, in some cases, narrow, winding slums. As they passed by a great building which, in a better light, he would have recognized as the Baptistry, his friend pointed backward over his shoulder, 'Ghiberti Gates,' he remarked nonchalantly. It seemed almost like a sacrilege to the young artist who had come across the ocean to see them. Later he writes:

FLORENCE, *November* 28, 1875

Mr. Dyer and I called this morning at the Baptistry where the bronze doors are, to see the children baptized. The poor little wretches are brought there when they are only a few hours old, and greased, and salted, and sprinkled, and mopped, until they do not know what to make of this world they have come into. There were two miserable little red things there this Morning 'getting religion.'

The son writes about his first glimpse of cosmopolitan society there in Florence, about his first palace, with its marble stairway, and flunkies and tapestries, not much like the Town Hall in Concord, and the flunkies not much like Patrick, who did the chores, and was his friend — and very likely the friend of Emerson as well; his first ball, also in a palace, where he danced opposite some beautiful princess, the daughter-in-law of the king, who wore a red gown and quite bewitched him, though they could not converse, she speaking only Italian and French, and he only his native English. But he had a fine time watching her, and wrote to his father, 'Sometime in the future when I make my ideal "Venus," it will be very much more beautiful for having studied for so long those sloping shoulders opposite me.'

Here and there he jotted down a few comments about art, but I am quite sure that he would tear up the whole manuscript if he ever came across these immature criticisms in print.

He is thrilled by his romantic surroundings, both artistic and luxurious: Mrs. Ibbetson's white marble palace, the most beautiful house he had ever seen; of the Christmas dinner, probably there — 'four turkeys, six ducks, ten chickens, really a great hospitality.'

Later on he must have, as he threatened to do, shut down on society, for he claims that he stayed at home often in the evening, while the rest of the family were out every night, and that his sole diversions were walks with Miss Lizzie Ball and Miss Nellie Powers to the most interesting places, of which the neighborhood was full. He writes of the great avenue upon which some of their houses backed, a romantic spot, more than a mile long, an old palace at the

top, the Roman Gate at the foot, and flanked with huge cypresses, said to have been planted by the Medici, and called 'the Poggio Imperiale.'

'Mr. Ball's house,' he writes, 'is handsome and tasteful, though we should freeze in such a house at home. The rooms are large and high — and occasionally a few flakes of snow! In fact Florence is about the coldest place I have ever experienced, excepting always Grandma's best bedroom in Chester.'

His friends felt that he worked too hard, that he did not go out enough; but again he writes to his father, 'I am going to shut down on society, except among these American families—my blood relations, so to speak; the Balls, the Powerses, the Ibbetsons,' and I suspect, though he does not mention it, the household of any unusually beautiful woman.

Apparently, however, before he put his plans into effect, he had quite a fling. He taught every one how to dance the 'Boston'; he had left it all the rage at home, and found it all the rage in Florence, except that they, none of them, knew how to dance it. 'I am teaching them all,' he writes, 'débutantes, countesses. Everybody crazy about it, but no one seems to know exactly how it goes.'

He also went to the Borghese Ball, at that time the great event of the Florentine season — 'danced until three o'clock, came home ready to sleep for a week.' There he saw the Contessa Mirafiore, the famous and beautiful mistress of Victor Emmanuel — also different from Concord life. 'Such rooms and such a lot of them. Such tapestries — oh, come, now, I want a palace!'

Within the next year or two, he went off on various trips, with either the Powerses or the Balls, and writes

DAN FRENCH AND NED POWERS AS RAPHAEL'S CHERUBS

home from Naples, from Venice, from the Dolomites, always having a good time, always enjoying himself.

He and some of his friends drove out from Rome to Garibaldi's place in the country, thinking that that particular day was a day of fête. This they found to be a mistake, but, upon interceding with the servant, and explaining that they had come from America, the latter relented, went back into the house, and in a few moments returned with the news that the Signor would see the Americani. They found the old hero seated at a table, elderly, and, at the time, far from well. He wore a white flannel shirt and a skull cap, and his hair was grey, but the thing that they remembered especially about him was the lovely pink-and-white of his complexion.

He was greatly taken with Miss Hattie Hurd, General Benjamin Butler's niece, who was with them, an exquisitely pretty young girl, and addressed most of his conversation to her, reciting Italian poems to show her the beauty of the Italian tongue. This, in spite of the fact that he spoke English perfectly, having lived in America for many years. His enunciation, Mr. French said, was very beautiful.

Curious incidents and humorous touches he writes to his family from Florence. 'Weather — amphibious. Always too hot or too cold, or something.'

He went to the Carnival and to various fêtes, and upon one occasion was disgusted with the American who made himself conspicuous by driving ten horses to his trap. During the Carnival he drove fourteen, all white, twisting and winding through the circuitous streets of Florence to the annoyance of every one else. The man was named Gray, the horses small and placid, and people spoke of them contemptuously as 'Gray and his sheep.'

At one time his friends Porter and Munzig turned up in Florence, naturally to his great delight. Porter he took out to visit his friends in their little colony, and later they went about together sight-seeing for days at a time. I like to think of these two friends and fellow artists away from home, prowling about the winding streets, discovering unexpected bits of artistic lore, and having a good time like boys together.

Always he wrote with the greatest admiration of his friend and master, Mr. Thomas Ball, and of the beautiful music, a constant quantity in their home life. One reason, perhaps, for so much music was the fact that Mr. Ball in his early days, before he was a sculptor, was a singer of note. He had sung the rôle of 'Elijah' in the oratorio of that name, and he used to say that he was prouder of that achievement than of his 'Washington statue' on the Boston Common. Young French loved the musical atmosphere of which there had been too little in Concord. They all played and sang — Mr. and Mrs. Ball, and Miss Ball, together.

Like young people everywhere, they had their pictures taken. The picture of Dan French and Ned Powers as Raphael's cherubs is amusing enough to reproduce here.

One night Mr. Ball had a very curious dream about his statue 'Eve Just Created.' He said that he thought he went into the studio in the morning and found that the figure, which he had left the night before on the turntable, had disappeared, leaving only the clay plinth behind her. It struck him as rather queer, but he concluded to look her up, and finally discovered a knee protruding from a closet, the door of which was nearly closed.

On trying to open the door, he perceived that she was

holding it and to such good purpose that the clay knee was crushed by its closing. Upon seeing this, he called to her, 'Why, Eve, why don't you open that door? Don't you see that you are crushing your knee?' Finally, by verbal and physical persuasion, he got the door open, and there was his beautiful statue crouched down in the corner of the closet still trying to hide, with her clay knees cracked open as they would be, naturally, if bent double.

Mr. Ball's anxiety at this was great, and he addressed her, 'Why don't you get up? Don't you see you are spoiling yourself? What did you come in here for, anyway?'

To which Eve modestly replied, 'Why, you didn't give me any clothes, and I was ashamed, and came in here to hide.'

'Well,' said Mr. Ball, 'all I have to say is that you are not the "Eve Just Created" I made you for, or you wouldn't know you were naked!' And there the dream ended.

Dan French writes more or less about his work, about the 'Minute Man' which he calls the 'Colonial,' and which his father was having unveiled for him in this country. This reminds me of a funny little incident a great many years later, when some photographs of his works were published in a French magazine. They were sent over labelled as they were always labelled in America — the 'Minute Man'; the 'Milmore Memorial'; or the 'Angel of Death'; 'Memories'; etc. When the magazine reached us, the statues were all labelled entirely correctly save the first, which was labelled 'Le Petit Homme.'

He felt somewhat anxious, of course, as to being away upon such a momentous occasion, the unveiling of his first statue. When it was given to him, he had written, 'It

makes me somewhat nervous.' He was only twenty-two at the time.

He asks his brother Will to send him a photograph of himself as the girls, Mrs. Powers and Miss Ball, were crazy to see what he looked like, and this the brother does, 'upon condition,' he writes, 'that you explain to them that my pictures are more better-looking than I am than your pictures are better-looking than you are.'

In the same letter, I think, his brother tells how he had taken Miss Preston to the unveiling. They went down across the meadow and found the boat half full of ice and water. The former they broke, bailed out the water, and climbed in, 'with no damage,' he writes, 'to anybody, though some discomfort.'

They reached the battle-ground and had a fine view of it from the river, with Emerson and Curtis and Blaine leading the procession, and perhaps catching pneumonia, though none of them seemed to die in consequence of it. Miss Preston's skirts where she had sat in the boat were frozen stiff about her ankles, and they later went over to the Keyeses' to thaw out and have a warm drink.

The two brothers seemed to have been greatly agitated about the pedestal. 'They all want a different kind,' the brother in Concord writes, 'some a round one, some a boulder. Nobody seems to know much about the subject.' And the brother in Florence writes back, 'If they have anything like the plans they have sent me, it will be a terror.'

So brother Will apparently took the pedestal in hand. 'I went down,' he writes, 'the night before, to see Mr. Emerson, and talked to him like a Dutch uncle'; though why it was necessary to talk to Mr. Emerson like a Dutch uncle, I do not know, for he had been from the first a good friend of

DRESS REHEARSAL FOR THE MINUTE MAN

Willie French in background as manager, the Architect and the Philosopher (Mr. Cabot and Mr. Emerson) as audience, and the Emerson horse, which, as Edward Emerson said, was restless when he stood still and peaceable when he went

the sculptor and was always the most reasonable of men. Perhaps it was an explanation, half humorous, half apologetic, of having addressed the great philosopher with a frankness which had seemed, under the circumstances, necessary.

'And yesterday,' he writes, 'the great Mr. Cabot, in the rôle of architect, came out from Boston, and with Mr. Emerson, the great philosopher, we drove out to the spot and made a study of it. The thermometer was about zero, and a fine breeze blowing. We stood Mr. Cole on the pedestal with a pole for a gun and, as you will see by the enclosed, held a kind of dress rehearsal; Mr. Cole as the embattled farmer, I keeping watch close by in the background, the philosopher and the architect in deep meditation, and the Emerson horse, which Edward claims is peaceful enough when he goes, but fiery when he stands still, waiting at one side with a sleigh.

'I think,' he writes, 'that the pedestal and the six-foot man will be about right.'

February 28, 1875.... You speak of the temptation it must be for a sculptor to stay in Florence. I admit that there is more to be seen in the way of art here, and that the marble work is better and more easily executed than at home, but I have seen enough to convince me that these by no means make up for the loss that one must experience in being away from his native land.... It is to me pitiable to see the regard and affection which these Americans over here have for a country which they call home, but in which they could never be happy after being brought up in this easy-going Italian city. Don't fear my ever wishing to make Florence my permanent residence. Mrs. Ball gets quite out of patience with my obstinacy in declaring my intention of sculping in Boston.

Although upon his arrival in America, his father met him down the bay in Boston, they did not go to Washington

immediately. They went up to Concord together to stay for a few weeks, and the young artist, who had been away from his beloved town for two years, must have been eager to see his old friends and old associations. On the day after his arrival, they gave a party for him — that is, Mrs. Joe Keyes gave the party, in her house just across the lane from the Old Manse. I don't know what they had to eat; it was before the days of afternoon teas — everything was called a party — but the young people all came, and many of the older ones; and after they had welcomed him, and fed him, and made a fuss over him, they all formed in a line and escorted him down the lane and across the 'rude bridge' and showed him the 'Minute Man,' which, of course, he had never seen in bronze. A fine home-coming, this, to a young sculptor!

CHAPTER VI

CONCORD IN 1878

In the summer of 1878, I went to Concord with my cousin Dan. Though we were not married till many years later, we always spoke of this trip upon the Fall River boat as our first wedding journey. I rather wonder that my conventional family let me go in so bohemian a manner, for that time, but I was just that minute out of the convent where for many years I had led a secluded life — short dresses and long hair — alas! no longer an implication of youth — and I suppose they still looked upon me as a little girl.

I was always thankful that I went at that period before the Old Concord had changed beyond recognition; while Mr. Emerson was still alive; while Mr. Alcott conversed, and Miss Louisa wrote; while Hawthorne was still a romantic figure; and Thoreau a burning subject of discussion among the practical people of the countryside.

The street called the 'Mill Dam' spread out into the oblong square, where, at one end, stood the old Wright Tavern, the Colonial Inn at the other, where once lived Thoreau's family. In those days, across the way, was the great shabby Middlesex Hotel, the only thing about which I can remember is that papers were found in the cellar to the effect that so many hogshead of rum — a hideous number — were imbibed in its prosperous days in the course of a week.

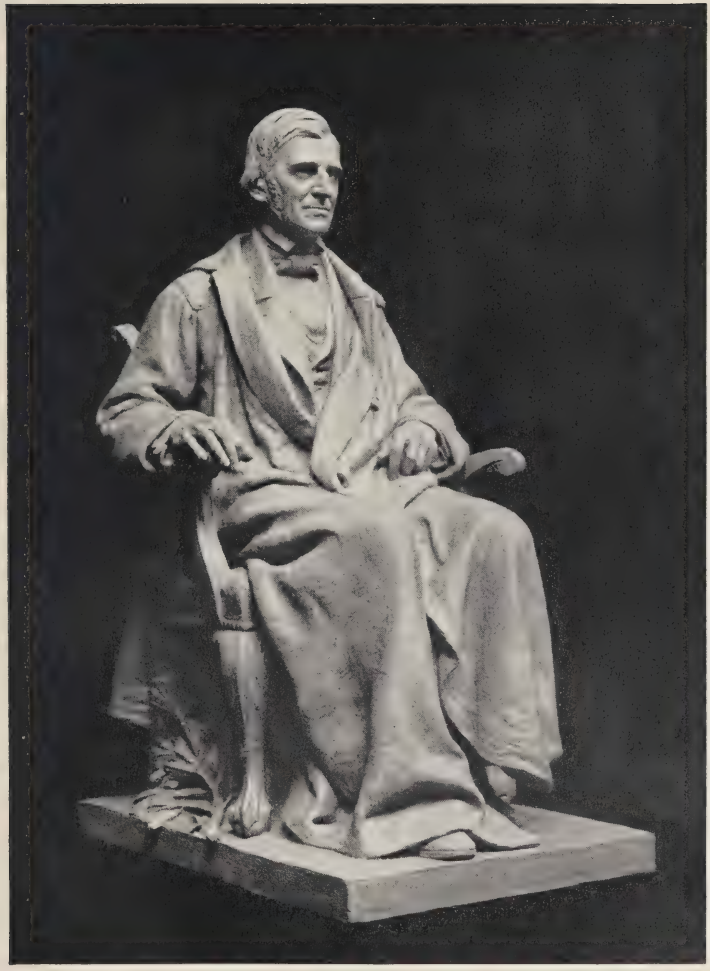
I like to close my eyes and see it laid out before me as if

it were a picture. The rather busy, rather shabby, business block with the green and the trees of the square beyond; the slim, black figure of Mr. Emerson; Mr. Alcott, patriarchal, and white of hair; Miss Louisa, driving about in her wicker pony carriage with its white horse; and Miss Ellen Emerson, riding sideways with billowing skirts upon her donkey; Thoreau and Hawthorne in the misty background.

Of course I never did see any such picture, but it might so easily have been there, for they were all familiar figures in the life of the town, and you knew they were always just around the corner, coming into view.

The one of them whom I remember best was Mr. Emerson, and the thing that pleased and rather surprised me was to see his slender figure, slightly stooping, a shawl about his shoulders, standing patiently in line with the rest at the post-office wicket — or, to quote my husband's words: 'the tall figure walking the village street, enveloped in a long black cloak or shawl, and looking as I imagine Dante must have looked as he walked the streets of Florence.'

And the donkey! Miss Ellen had brought him back from Fayal. He was good-sized, of a nondescript grey, with a real donkey jog as he ambled down the street. Miss Ellen always did the natural thing. She was an exquisite person who lived in a world of her own, and it never occurred to her that, before the days of automobiles, she shouldn't amble about Concord as she had ambled about the Azores, on a patient, quiet donkey who would wait outside, wagging his ears, without the care or attention demanded by a horse. She was a wonderful if somewhat incongruous figure, Miss Ellen, full skirts of thin summer stuff billowing



RALPH WALDO EMERSON
Statue in the Concord Public Library

out and enveloping one side of the little beast, her spiritual face, with its smooth hair, slightly uplifted, her thin, delicate hands holding the reins and, as is always necessary with donkeys, trying to shove him along.

But Miss Ellen and the donkey were both of them mistaken in thinking that Concord in the least resembled the Azores. The boys teased him, the dogs barked at him, the horses ran away at sight of him, Miss Ellen, more or less, tumbled off, and the poor little beast, who had expected to settle down to a life of transcendental ease and luxury, was relegated to the back of the house, to drawing wood and doing ignominious chores about the place. But perhaps a donkey, being a donkey, wouldn't mind!

And the philosophers! The day of my arrival I remember seeing queer-looking people upon the street, what in those days we spoke of as 'long-haired men and short-haired women,' though the term would have at present but slight application.

'Who is that?' I would ask in reference to some woman in clothes which to my eyes, fresh from Washington, were at least odd.

'Oh, that's a philosopher,' some one would tell me.

It was the season of the Summer School of Philosophy, and the philosophers were like flies, many of them bedraggled-looking, and we young people naturally did a good deal of laughing; but, on the other hand, many of them were the most interesting and brilliant people of the time.

It all depends — upon which you care for most. I, personally, have always had a great leaning towards pretty clothes and the amenities of life. Still, if people haven't time or inclination to keep their minds upon such things,

and if their minds do stay upon the great things of life, that makes up for most everything.

For instance, my cousin Mrs. Hudson tells a story about going to Boston with one of the Concord intellectuals, who, by the way, was a most lovable person, and most brilliant. My cousin said she was absorbingly interesting all the way down in the train, and later, at the Museum, where they went to see the Sargent pictures. This woman knew more about Sargent, and more about pictures generally, than almost anybody, and my cousin drank it in. On the way home, they discovered that Miss K——, who was dressed in quiet, rather easy-going black, had her skirt on wrong side out! They were both so interested in art and were having such a beautiful time that I wonder they discovered it at all; and really what difference did it make? My cousin said she would have been willing to wear all her clothes wrong side out if she could have known as much about Sargent and could have given as great a thrill to others as she herself had felt that day.

There has already been so much written about Concord and the School of Philosophy that it seems superfluous to try to add to it. And yet the personal equation is such a variable commodity that many of these little incidents which happened to me never happened, I am quite sure, to any one else, and were all so irrevocably bound up with my husband's early life in Concord that they may seem worth while. To have *lived* them through all his impressionable years, to have basked in the friendship and the smile of Emerson, to have known him as a neighbor, was the greatest of all privileges that could come to a young worker in art. For no one ever laughed at Mr. Emerson. There was never anything but reverence for the great philosopher, the

great neighbor, the great friend, though there may have been some aloofness from the poet, the thinker of great thoughts.

I went to one of the conversations held at the Emerson house, and the chief thing which I remember was the slim figure of Mr. Emerson presiding. He sat, as those who attended these evenings will recall, in front of the fireplace between the two doors leading into his study, the rest of us more or less in rows facing him. It was one of those later years of his life and people said he was failing; he turned to his son Edward, who was near him, now and then, slightly troubled for an escaping word. I was a young girl at the time and of not too serious a turn of mind, but I have carried with me through life that picture of the great man sitting there before us and the benediction of his beautiful smile.

Mr. William French, in telling of a meeting which he attended and which he himself greatly enjoyed, said that his brother Dan admitted that he heard very little of the philosophy; that he and another youth stood upon the back porch, intending to listen through the windows, but the listening was impossible owing to the noise and confusion in the near-by kitchen; that the servants were in a great state of mind because the wash-benches had been carried into the drawing-room for the philosophers to sit upon, and that it was impossible to prepare things for the next morning's work, which was Monday morning and wash-day!

And years afterward an author tells of going, as a struggling student, to see Emerson to ask of him the honor of his written name. Emerson, of course, gave it to him, talked to him pleasantly, and then in his gentle, high-bred

manner, as if he were asking a favor said, 'And I should like to have *you* write in *my* autograph album,' which the young and struggling author, long years afterward, remembered and treasured, and loved to tell.

Of course the tales about the School of Philosophy were true enough. Somebody did talk about the 'itness of the it,' and the 'whatness of the there,' and Professor Harris, upon one occasion did say, 'The soul thinks itself, and the soul thinks it's not self,' but those were only extreme expressions of a uniform seeking for the good and the true, a galaxy of fine names, beginning with Emerson, Alcott, Curtis, Channing, Miss Elizabeth Peabody.

Alcott was a dreamer, of course, but if one can be a real dreamer of real dreams, is not that the greatest of all? To the young, man is good or bad, but, as we go on in life, we come to feel that our minds and characters are made up in stripes. There is the wide stripe of wisdom, and the deep stripe of integrity, and the elusive stripe of poetic vision. And on either side of them, and between them, are other stripes of common-sense, of honesty, of practical affairs, so faint and imperfect as to be almost blanks. Barely a person has them all, and a man dreams according to his inherited stripes. The dreams of one are just queer, while the dreams of another are worth while. But if a man has any vision with the stars and brings down to earth and leaves there some glint of their elemental truth, then the world is better because he has lived and dreamed.

Alcott, I believe, from what I have gathered from his friends and family, was one of these. His ideas of education, to the practical application of which he was unequal, were far ahead of his time. His family adored him, and, though he tried them sometimes to the point of starvation,

he was always an inspiration to them. Miss Louisa's definition of genius was that it was like an escaping balloon which all the rest of the family were hanging on to and trying to bring back to earth.

Mr. Alcott, when he was sitting for his bust, told Mr. French the following story:

'One morning when I was at home teaching my children, Samuel Staples, who was the town constable, and almost a nextdoor neighbor, came to my house and told me that he would have to take me to jail for not paying my taxes — I was not willing to support a government that protected slavery. '"Very well, Samuel," said I, "if you will wait a moment until Mrs. Alcott can put some food in a basket" — the prison fare was too rich for me, being a vegetarian — "I will go with you."

'So presently Mrs. Alcott brought me a basket and Staples and I walked slowly down to the jail. Arrived there, the matron said she was sorry that Mr. Alcott's cell was not made up yet.

'"Well," I said, "Samuel, I will go back and resume teaching my children, and when you want me, you can come for me."

'So I went back to the house, and presently Samuel came, but he said that Squire Hoar had paid my taxes so he could not take me to jail.

'I told him that I did not know what *right* Squire Hoar had to pay my taxes!'

We must always remember that these people were bright, and very human, not always highbrow, but sparkling in conversation. Everybody in Concord seemed to be,

in one way or another, intelligent, owing, I suppose to the constant coming together of so many brilliant minds. In fact, some one said — I believe that it was Secretary Boutwell — upon being asked if there was any business in the town, 'Oh, no, Concord is a place where the inhabitants support themselves by writing for the "Atlantic Monthly."'

I remember how they gathered at the Bartlett house on a Sunday evening, played games and told stories and talked, the kind of talk that used to be called 'conversation.' Both George Bartlett and Ripley, his brother, were wits. I cannot remember what any one said, but I do remember that I laughed until I was tired. Sometimes there were glimpses of gossip and mimicry. Miss Martha spoke of them as 'Sunday night reviles.'

And the games — of course in those days young people played games much more than they do now — but the games of wit and intellect were brought to perfection in Concord at that time — at least, so they seemed to me, being utterly devoid of any such facility. There was 'capping poetry,' and a wonderful game of being asked why a person who sat near you was like an object, usually a wild animal, an elephant, or more often an object in the room. I remember one answer which greatly pleased us. A very handsome man, a successful banker in Boston, Albert B——, happened to be present, and the question was:

'Why is Albert [the handsome young banker] like that fern?' pointing to a large and showy fern in a bay window.

With scarcely a hesitation, the answer came: 'Because he has been transplanted from the bank where he belongs to the parlor which he adorns.'

This was from my young aunt from Washington, who was quite equal to any of them with her wit.

Concord was certainly in those days, before motors had opened it up to the world, a beautiful village. Wedded as I am to my Berkshire Hills, this low-lying town, with its sloping fields and winding river, still seems full of peace and loveliness. Back of the houses upon Main Street were lawns and gardens, down to the very edge of the stream, and when we wanted to go anywhere, we took a boat and paddled along from one house to another.

Up at the end of the street, as we drifted under the bridge, there was the gable of Frank Sanborn's house, with its strange letters worked into the bricks which a foreigner might have thought some Eastern charm, but which we of New England origin knew to be 'Ariana,' the name of the wife of his early days.

It was a quaint old town, nestling there among its big trees, surrounded by meadows, with two sides to the river, and its old white houses, not many of them pretentious, but with good architecture and good furniture and traditions, and above all, with fine people — as my brother-in-law, Mr. William French, expressed it, a place where you felt that the people themselves were finer than the clothes they wore and the houses they lived in.

To be sure, those first years of my life in Concord were in no way oppressed by exalted thought, or at least by their expression. It seemed to be largely made up of theatricals, picnics, and shows. My cousin Dan and the two Bartletts, Ripley and George, were famous for the variety of shows in which they excelled, both indoors and outdoors. In fact, Mr. George Bartlett afterward made this a profes-

sion and travelled about the country, giving tableaux, charades, etc., for the society people in big cities, among whom he was in great demand.

I remember one beautiful procession of illuminated boats upon the river, among others a Venetian barge. Our boat, in which my cousin rowed, was 'Youth on the Prow, and Pleasure at the Helm'; young Stedman Buttrick launching himself forward like a youthful figurehead, and I, as Pleasure at the helm, surrounded with great luxury, as well as incredible heat from the lanterns and innumerable mosquitoes.

At a Christmas celebration, though I was not present, and only remember it by hearsay, they had arranged two hemlock trees, trimmed so as to stand together as one. At a signal the two trees swung apart at the top, and in the open space was suspended a shallow basket with the Christ Child, curled up quite free of clothes, and a halo about his head. At the rehearsal the little cherub who was to take the leading part stood waiting, pink and white and naked, to be helped into his perch. He watched eagerly the great trees swing away from each other, and, as the Christmas song burst forth, 'I Know That My Redeemer Liveth,' he straightened up, glanced about at his friends, showed his white baby teeth and smiled; 'That's me,' he cried, puffing out his little pink chest.

The picnics were a continuous performance. Groups of boats were always going up the river or down the river, up the North Branch or up to the Sudbury Meadows, for luncheon or supper, and often to Egg Rock — a point of rocky land jutting out into the dividing stream; and my chief memory of Egg Rock is an unsuspecting young man from Boston, good-looking, conventional, a great catch, I

believe, at that particular time, trying to eat a three-cornered piece of Boston cream pie, with the cream filling running down his neck and disappearing into the sleeves of his immaculate coat, and trying to look as if he enjoyed himself.

It was certainly a spot of peace and plenty, no rich and no poor. My sister-in-law, Mrs. Bartlett, wrote, 'I am glad to live in a place like this where there is no poverty.' It was a real democracy — from the inside — as only a true democracy can be. Everything was settled at town meeting, where everybody went and everybody was interested. The few people who had money would have scorned to make any show; very few people had two servants, some of the most cultivated, none. The young people, as I remember them, were indefatigable dancers, but they simply went to each other's houses and danced, and served, perhaps, cider and apples and doughnuts, sometimes, when the invitations were slightly more formal, ice cream. There was little service, and it would have been ostentatious to try to serve a supper where there was no one to cook it but the hostess, and those who could easily have afforded it would have thought it extreme to set a standard which their friends could not live up to.

There was little talk about their ideas; it was simply part of their way of thinking and living. And yet, socially prominent people came there constantly from the cities, and from abroad. I remember two English beauties who had had brilliant London seasons, who had the time of their lives in Concord, going to dance and supper at the Wayside Inn, to play games at the Bartletts', or to meet some distinguished person at the puritanically simple and puritanically beautiful Emerson home. The Evarts girls were

there from Washington — their father, William M. Evarts, was at that time Secretary of State, and one of our country's great men — whom I had looked up to as the socially exalted, and how simply and naturally they loved the Concord life!

There was one story of the social democracy in Concord which I always remembered. Miss Alicia Keyes came to visit me. I had known her always in Concord, but this was the first time she had come to my house in New York. She was very handsome, with features of the clean-cut, Boston type, but not stylish, and sublimely unconscious of clothes. I had seen her at parties for years, in the simplest and most unnoticeable of evening gowns, though I knew she went often to visit among her 'swell' friends in Newport and Boston.

I gave a dinner for her, and, without thinking in the least about her clothes, I invited people whom I thought she would care to see and who would be interested in her brilliant mind. When she came downstairs that evening, before the other guests had arrived, and appeared in the doorway, I literally gasped for breath. Her soft hair was naturally *ondulé*, before the days when we could buy a wave for a dollar and a half; she was dressed in a beautiful robin's-egg blue silk gown of a most distinguished cut, with handsome lace about her shoulders and sleeves, and a rare old jewel to hold it in place.

'Why, Alicia,' I said, 'where did you get the gown?'

She thought for a moment, moved about slightly so that I could see the train. 'Why, I got it in Paris a year ago. You see when I go out among my grand friends, I don't want to disgrace them. I wore it once in Boston at the B——'s, and once at Newport last summer.'

'But I never saw it!' I cried. 'You never wear it in Concord.'

She stood still for a moment and watched me. 'Oh, no,' she said, 'I never wear it in Concord. You see there aren't more than a half-dozen people in Concord who could afford such a gown and they wouldn't — we wouldn't — wear a dress like this — there — it wouldn't do, you know.'

And I thought of the little black-and-white check gown, piped with red and half open at the neck, in which I had seen her at the Concord festivities, and it seemed to me that that was a democracy of which I had so far never dreamed.

Of course there were always wits in Concord during those first years which I spent there. George Bartlett and Robertson James were the two that stood forth. It was said that upon one occasion George Bartlett offered to help a young woman over a fence or a wall — I have forgotten which.

'Oh, no,' she said, balancing herself. 'I am quite able to support myself.'

He stood back, clasped his hands and gazed at her ecstatically.

'Oh, madam,' he said, 'you are just the woman I have been looking for all my life!'

Robertson James was the third of the three famous James brothers — Henry, and Professor William James of Harvard — and, in conversation, certainly the wit of the family. He had a way of strolling into the studio while my cousin was at work, making comments on everybody in town, his host and myself included — comments so delicious and keen, and with such a twinkle of his eye and a drawing-down of the corners of his mouth, that no one could ever take offence, no matter how personal they were.

They were usually apropos of some particular person or occasion, and I have forgotten them with one brilliant exception. He and George Bartlett were rather given to showing their wit at each other's expense. George had no love of good clothes and also, being terribly near-sighted, had a way of shuffling along quite oblivious of passing glances.

On this particular morning he and Miss Margaret Putnam had started off upon an early expedition upon the river to see the sunrise. The girls all liked to go about with Mr. Bartlett, although he was old enough to be their father, because he was entertaining and such a lover of all that was beautiful.

Miss Putnam was very young, a Boston girl, very blonde and very dainty, and they did have something of the air of beauty and the beast in the early morning light. Suddenly they met Mr. James, a man of fifty, well-dressed and easy of manner. As they passed, the ill-matched couple paused for a casual greeting.

'Good-morning, Mr. James,' said Miss Putnam, with a sideways glance from under her coquettish hat. 'You see I am the early bird!'

Mr. James from his superior height glanced swiftly across the girlish figure to the slouching middle-aged man — the reddish beard, the vague near-sighted eyes, the gaping pockets of the careless coat. His eyes twinkled, his mouth twitched.

'And, faith,' he said, 'you've *got* him!' as gravely as he could, and passed on down the street.

Of course Judge Hoar was famous for his wit — the wit of a most sarcastic and brilliant mind — but most of his sayings have been quoted and printed. There was always a

rivalry between Concord and Lexington as to who fought the great fight. And once, when the Lexington people sent out an invitation, there was a mistake in the wording — a word wrongly used — and Judge Hoar remarked that 'that was the first evidence that he had ever had that the Lexingtonians murdered the King's English.'

Judge Hoar also said about Wendell Phillips's funeral — he and Phillips had never liked each other — 'that he couldn't go, but he approved.'

We always called the Hoars the 'Royal Family.' They lived in a large house, had good horses, and entertained constantly, but would have scorned any different scale of living from that of their friends and neighbors. I think the idea would never have occurred to them. Their youngest daughter, Beth, afterwards Mrs. Samuel Bowles, was very beautiful, with a radiant, rare kind of beauty, large blue eyes, a most elevated expression. Some said of her that she looked like the real 'princess of the fairy tale.'

After my marriage, Judge Hoar came to see me one day. As there was no one else at home, we had a long talk in front of the fire, and he was most entertaining. He told me one story which I am quite sure I have never heard from any other source.

'I remember,' he said, 'going up the road somewhere with Mr. Emerson, Alcott, George William Curtis, and Frank Sanborn. When we started to take the train back at a tiny wayside station, we found it was going to be an hour and a half late. We wandered up the railroad track for some distance, to a place where the land sloped back in a gradual acclivity, a fence at the top. There being nowhere to go in particular, and the fence at the top interfering with a siesta upon the flat land above, we lay down —

five of us — in a row slightly uphill with our hands under our heads, and talked philosophy until we heard the train shrieking in the distance.'

Frank Sanborn was one of the picturesque figures of the community, long and lank, with a kind of graceful awkwardness which is, I think, one of the peculiarities of the Americans, both in New England and in the West. With rather long flat hair, a bright color, and twinkling eyes, he had a way of folding himself up in a chair, settling down in it, drooping his head to one side, and holding forth. I often think of the well-known story of how the anti-abolitionists tried to abduct him; how he spread his long limbs like a windmill, and of course they never got him in through the door of the coach. And when his sister-in-law seized the whip and lashed the horses into a frenzy, how surprised those abductors must have been!

Thoreau I was never fortunate enough even to see, although he was a byword among my friends, having died before those years of my life in Concord. He was laughed at and criticised a great deal, and must have been in many ways a trial to the farmers, having a way of ignoring their rights, and telling them that their complaints about fires in their forests or clearings were stupid, because after all the landscape belonged quite as much to him as to them. Still, he was greatly appreciated by all the people of a literary or intellectual turn of mind. I loved to hear the farmers talk about him. One of them used to say:

'Henry D. Thoreau — Henry D. Thoreau,' jerking out the words with withering contempt. 'His name ain't no more Henry D. Thoreau than my name is Henry D. Thoreau. And everybody knows it, and he knows it. His name's *Da*-a-vid Henry and it ain't never been nothing

but *Da*-a-vid Henry. And he knows that! Why, one morning I went out in my field across there to the river, and there, beside that little old mud pond, was standing *Da*-a-vid Henry, and he wasn't doin' nothin' but just standin' there — lookin' at that pond, and when I came back at noon, there he was standin' with his hands behind him just lookin' down into that pond, and after dinner when I come back again if there wan't *Da*-a-vid standin' there just like as if he had been there all day, gazin' down into that *pond*, and I stopped and looked at him and I says, "Da-a-vid Henry, what air you a-doin'?" And he didn't turn his head and he didn't look at me. He kept on lookin' down at that pond, and he said, as if he was thinkin' about the stars in the heavens, "Mr. Murray, I'm a-studyin' — the habits — of the bullfrog!" And there that darned fool had been standin' — the livelong day — *a-studyin'* — the habits — of the *bull*-frog!'

And that, outside of his books, was all I ever knew of 'Da-a-vid Henry Thoreau.'

As to Miss Ellen, there was never anybody like Miss Ellen. An admirer once said that when she gazed upon the face of Emerson she always felt that that face had seen God. The same might have been said of Miss Ellen. She certainly saw God. Some people claim that she never saw anything else — a difficult situation in this over-practical world. She went through life shedding a spiritual glory by way of her smile; small wonder that she took no account of changing styles, of foods, of passing states of mind. How could any one be practical who lived in the realm of the Beatitudes?

I remember my cousin Marion, who was in her Sunday School class, saying, 'I don't care, Miss Ellen, I will not

sing your wormy hymns any longer.' I don't know why Miss Ellen, a Unitarian, should have been exploiting wormy hymns, left over, probably, from some earlier phase of teaching, but I am glad my cousin said it, for it has kept a certain classic and otherwise forgotten poem in my mind.

I don't know whether he was indigenous to New England — he sounds like a negro spiritual — but it was there that I first met him, that tiny pale green worm, an inch and a half long, who got over the ground by planting his chin with perhaps a small portion of his anatomy upon the earth, drawing the end of his tail up under him, the middle of his body making a great loop in the air, and thus step by step working his way along the earth. His methods were evidently inspiring, for the hymn went:

> 'Inchin' along — inchin' along — towards our God,
> Inchin' *along* like a little inch *worm;*
> Inchin' along — inchin' along like a little inch worm.'

Such a beautiful sentiment! Perhaps Miss Ellen retained it because she liked its humor.

I remember one party at the Emerson house after Mr. Emerson had gone, when Mrs. Emerson sat at one side of the table facing us and her son Edward at the other. She was a picture in her simple black silk gown and her little Quaker-like cap. It was an exquisite cap of white muslin, with a slightly upstanding crown, little white flaps coming down upon her shoulders, and a tiny pale blue ribbon tying it in place under her delicate chin.

And how attentive he was to her, how reverent in his manner, whenever she ventured a remark, sometimes to interrupt him with a gentle, fragile gesture. Her face was like old ivory; she was very old at that time, and it seemed as if everything had left her except this spiritual beauty of

MRS. RALPH WALDO EMERSON

the life through which she had passed. I have never forgotten it; in fact, years afterwards, when I went back to visit the house, it was brought most vividly to my memory — but to that we will come later.

I remember so well Miss Ellen as she appeared that evening. She sat in the front row, facing her mother and brother at the table where she might have touched them at any minute, and where she did, now and then, offer some slight suggestion, her beautiful face uplifted, absorbed, to theirs. It reminded me of something that Mr. French's sister had written in one of her letters: 'I went to a lecture by Mr. Emerson last night, said to be his ninety-ninth, and was impressed by the fact that his family were all seated in the front row, applauding as vigorously as if it were the first they had ever heard.'

On this particular evening, Miss Ellen wore a black silk gown made with a full skirt and a basque. No one except Miss Ellen wore basques at that time. They had gone out of fashion forty years before, but this little trimming which edged it about was a very ingenious trimming, and caught and held my fancy. It was made of a narrow fold of the same material, folded backward and forward so as to hunch up into little mounds that looked more or less like shells, and had been considered very artistic. Miss Ellen wore things that seemed to her beautiful, quite regardless of fashion, and which certainly suited her style. In the middle of the discussion, we adjourned into the dining-room, where we were fed, as I remember, upon creamed oysters and rolls and coffee and cake, quite a spread for those intellectual Concord days.

Miss Ellen did the honors in the dining-room, in her simple, naturally elegant manner, and then we went back

for a continuation of the lecture. She had been very busy looking out for the guests, and, after we were all seated, she came in, slightly hurried, a glass of milk in one hand, some graham crackers in the other, seated herself in her old place facing the speakers, and proceeded to drink the milk and eat the crackers, afterwards holding the empty glass in her hand, quite as unconscious of any unconventionality as if she had been a child of five. And why not? She had been otherwise occupied while other people were eating, and why go hungry in consequence of having been a good hostess?

People said that they also saw her hurrying to the train in the morning, eating a roll or some kind of hurried breakfast, as she rode down the village street. She was a great power in the community, especially with the young people and in her Sunday School class, and I am sure that all the young people who worked with her carried through life with them something that was high and beautiful which Miss Ellen had given them.

After my marriage she came to see me one day, and brought me our wedding present in her hand, unwrapped, through the village street. It was a brass pitcher some ten inches tall, to be used for hot water. It was a present which they gave to the young people of the family. In the middle of the front there were engraved the Emerson initials in big, rather square letters, and on the other side were our own initials, 'M. F.' and 'D. C. F.'

The last time I saw Miss Ellen was at a family wedding at which we were all present. It was the summer that our daughter was about fifteen years old, and only a few years before Miss Ellen's death. She sat upon a low sofa against a background of white curtained windows. Her gown was

of heavy ribbed silk of the palest, almost silvery robin's-egg blue, the full skirt billowed out over the seat about her, the tight-fitting basque, the flat lace collar with its old-fashioned pin, and above it the beautiful small head with its white hair parted and drawn down into a small knot in the back of the neck, the uplifted face, eager, radiant, serene. I was always glad that my child could have seen her thus and could remember her as she looked that night.

Years afterwards, during the war, we went back to Concord and took our daughter and son-in-law to see the Emerson house. Miss Leagate and Miss Hurd, both friends of the Emerson family, were living there and did the honors. We sat about the tea-table in the big back room, and talked over old times, and I was impressed with the fact that, including our cousin, Miss Keyes, who was at the time our hostess, there were five people present who had known Mr. Emerson and the family.

And the front room with the armchair in which he sat and wrote, and his books which were part of himself, from floor to ceiling, all kinds of volumes from other great authors, many of them from across the sea, several of them from Carlyle, some of them beautifully illustrated.

I began to tell them about the evening so many years before when I had been present, and had watched Mrs. Emerson at the table beside her son and how beautiful and quaint she had been. I described her puritanical black gown, her lovely muslin cap, and started to say, 'tied under the chin with very narrow pale blue ribbon,' but I stopped — really that hardly sounded probable. I must be drawing upon my imagination.

Miss Leagate said, 'Haven't you seen the portrait of Mrs. Emerson, dressed just as you describe her?' So we

went upstairs, and there upon the landing — there she was looking just as I had seen her, some thirty years before. It was a pastel, the pale blue eyes gazing innocently into yours, the delicate features, fragile, it seemed to me, like a piece of Belleek china, as if they would evaporate at the slightest touch. There was the folded white fichu across the shoulders, the ethereal white cap, and — a tiny bow of narrow blue ribbon beneath the chin. I gave a sigh of relief. This memory, which had stayed with me for so many years, was true.

CHAPTER VII

CHESTER: A PURITAN BACKGROUND

AWAY up among the hills of New Hampshire, deserted by the railroad and by civilization generally, lies this tiny village where, a great many years ago in Puritan New England, were planted the seeds in which, by some strange and inexplicable method of natural selection, it was foreordained that Dan French should be born an artist.

'Why do you want' — Judge French used to ask — 'why do you want to go delving back into the past and run your head into a halter?' Still — though I am not as sure as was the man who said boldly, 'I know that *my* ancestor didn't come over in the Mayflower, for the very simple reason that he was in jail in England at the time the old ship sailed' — I have always been given to understand that our mutual forbears came to America in 1630, settled in Ipswich, later in Epping, then in Chester, New Hampshire, which spot we of a later generation came to know and to love.

It was a strange background for one who was not only an artist, but who has been all his life an apostle of beauty; it was a background that was certainly momentous; its stern character, its unyielding purpose, its bleak religion.

I love to read about them up there among their barren hills, these old 'Gershoms' and 'Ebenezers' and 'Keziahs,' but I am thankful not to have been one of them. Which reminds me of an apt description which has stayed in my mind for many years. It ran something like this: 'Those dear Puritans — we are so proud to be descended from

them, and so thankful for each decade which removes us farther from them in descent.'

Also in the diary of one old parson, we read:

> Sunday, January 1st, wife gave birth to a nine pound boy. We named him 'Gershom.'
>
> Sunday, January 8th, we christened small Gershom. The snows were heavy, wife not yet strong enough to go to meeting.
>
> Sunday, January 15th, we buried little Gershom. Wife still too weak to attend the funeral.

Could anything be more bleak, more cold, than a little newborn shivering baby in a linen shirt, fine linen, short, with narrow lace at neck and armpits? — I know those shirts, for there were some of them heirlooms in our family attic. I suppose he wore other clothes, but I can only think of the small slippery linen next his tender skin, when they marched him down through the piled-up snow, sprinkled him with ice water, and one week later buried him beneath the frozen ground!

Not much in common between this little fellow and the standardized baby of modern days — born in a hospital, nurtured in an incubator, fed upon Mellin's Food, mothered by a trained nurse — what do they know about the shivering babyhood of these early founders of our mighty race?

The first time I ever saw Chester to remember it was upon a summer day when I was about eighteen. I left the railroad at the near-by town of Derry and drove over upon the stage. It was a bare black box of a structure, not at all like the low-swung gilded chariots which I had seen in museums and which were my idea of a stage-coach. I imagine it was the last of its kind. I rode, to my great delight, up in front with the driver, one Wilcomb, a

sociable, good-as-you-be Yankee, who knew all about me from the day I was born, and more, and settled down to give me a good time. It was a long hard trip, or would have been to any one less young or less absorbed in every new phase of life than I. Winding around corners, ploughing through sandy ruts, up and down long hills, the horses always walking when they were not standing still, stopping once or twice to leave a package or to pick up some benighted female who wanted to go still farther into the wilderness. The distance, I have heard later, was six miles.

At the top of a long barren hill, we emerged into the little town of Chester. It was not so much a square as it was a spreading-out at one end of the long single street. There were the two white meeting-houses, the store, the small hotel, and the big old graveyard, where rested so many of the 'Gershoms' and the 'Betseys' who have left us old stories and old letters over which we used to pore.

It was rather a pretty town — its long street, its big trees, its irregular paths by way of sidewalks, its nice old houses with their picket fences and Colonial doorways. Up near the end of the street stood our ancestral home, which our grandfather, Daniel French, had built in 1800, and where, with his vintage of wives and family of ten boys and girls, he had lived. And here Dan French and his brother Will had come year after year for their vacation.

My Mr. French used to say that he had spent one month of every year of his life there, and always supposed, until he was old enough to know better, that it had been his entire summer, so glorified did those few weeks of vacation seem to him.

One story that he used to tell must have been when he was very young indeed. Some of the older boys told him

that, if he picked a pail of blueberries, the grocer would buy them; so he trudged off into the fields some distance from the house, and alone — which was not his custom — and worked hard until his pail was full. When he came back tired and hot, the man at the store did not want them, and so he went home and sat down upon the bulkhead at the side of the house with his pail of berries, and wept. He had never been in business before, and it did not enter his head to make another effort. Fortunately, Grandmother found him before his tears were dry, bought the berries, comforted him, and made him a pie.

When I arrived that afternoon, I felt rather like an old print, descending from my perch at the side of the loquacious stage-driver. The family were all out in front, aunts and cousins, and in the background the little bent figure of the grandmother, the third and last of Daniel French's wives.

It was a large house — that is, a hall in the middle, and rather large rooms upon either side — the only three-storied house in the town. Across the roof was a railing decorated with little urns; also a fence in front with urns upon the gateposts, though this decoration was later removed, when the house was 'made over.'

Inside the door was a small square hall, the steep stairway going up at sharp angles a few steps at a time, with queer old family portraits upon the landings.

The guest-room I remember best; the highboy with brass handles which shook when we walked across the floor.

That summer, when Dan French arrived, the first thing he did was to grab the newest visitor and take him upstairs to see if those handles really rattled as violently as

DANIEL FRENCH
The author's grandfather

he remembered them to have done. He came down in a few minutes to announce gleefully that they really did, especially if you stepped upon certain boards in the floor, or rather stamped on them. He said that if he could only feel the sheets frozen stiff about his mouth, and hear the ice crack in the bowl when he did his hurried bathing in the morning, it would make him feel like a boy again.

At the back of the house was the best parlor, large and square, its Puritanism mitigated by an incident that had happened in the family a few years before. My aunt Helen had, as she liked to express it, escaped spinsterhood, at the age of fifty-two, by marrying a well-to-do Boston gentleman some years older than herself, and brought him back with some of his possessions and settled him down in the old house in Chester, with some Louis Quinze furniture, strangely out of place in the old room, also strangely luxurious and comfortable.

The little grandmother was ninety when I first knew her, and she lived to be ninety-seven, the last remaining wife of old Daniel French. Her predecessors had been Mercy Brown and Betsy Van Mater Flagg, and her comparatively dull drab name before her marriage had been Sarah Wingate Flagg. One of the disrespectful great-grandsons used to call her 'S. Wingate' for short, 'just to make her feel young and perky,' he said, her maiden name having not been mentioned for nearly a hundred years.

She was a little woman, with a shawl over her shoulders, and wore a transformation, called in those days a 'front.' She was rather an important person in the neighborhood, having lived there in the same house for so many years, and also, though she would not have relished the idea, on account of her advanced age. On one occasion her neigh-

bor, Miss S—— came in and brought a visiting friend to see her. The visiting friend, who came from a small town, showed a provincial and possibly patronizing interest in the old lady, asked her many questions as to her health, her memories, and the past life of the town, and finally said, 'Let me see, Mrs. French, I have forgotten just how old you *are*' — this in a sympathetic and flattering tone. Grandma looked out of the window for a moment or two, turned back, and drew herself up, and after another moment spoke. 'Twenty-five — if it is any of your business,' she answered tartly. And the visiting friend arose, gathered her mistaken interest to herself, and said good-bye.

It was a quaint old village, with one street running, as it did, along the top of a ridge, lonely, but full of charm.

'Do you know,' one of the cousins remarked upon her return from the post-office, 'I went the whole length of the village street and never saw a soul, not even a Peeping Tom at a window! Really, Lady Godiva would have a soft snap in Chester!'

Down at the other end of the street, one of our favorite walks was the cemetery where lay our aunts and uncles, who seemed, most of them, especially the women, to have died of what they called a 'wasting sickness.' Apparently in those days they seldom mentioned consumption, though in one of the old letters an uncle referred to it as a possibility, and says that 'the doctor is giving her medicine, but it seems to do no good.'

They slept in bitter-cold rooms, and bathed in bitter-cold water, and roasted themselves in front of blazing fires. They worked around the house in the morning in low-necked dresses without sleeves, and in the evening

put little capes over their shoulders as being more dressy, and took no systematic out-of-door exercise, except perhaps some few among the more highly educated. Still, as I think of it, there were two sides to it. They were at least allowed to die peacefully in their beds. They were not put through all the surgical gymnastics of the modern clinic, and every known organ was not pried off them as is done by the modern method. At least there were some things to be said in its favor.

Opposite the house was a little one-room building which had been Grandfather French's office.

There was also an old road leading down to somewhere in the woods, which we called 'Love Lane,' immortalized to us younger people as the spot where, so many years before, our Uncle Major, unknown to any one, had strolled down with his Bess one cold moonlight night, the ground covered with snow, and had married her. The Major must have been a gay blade in his young days to have dared such a thing in the all-seeing town of Chester.

One of the stories also was that when the young couple first returned to the old Richardson house — they had kept the marriage secret for a long time — to break the news and ask forgiveness, they sauntered down the street, paused, and two or three times turned back. Finally they saw old Judge Richardson, the bride's father, reading at the open parlor window. Not knowing what to say, and being greatly embarrassed, they finally went off once again, and brought back the marriage certificate. They stood out of sight, and poked this paper up until it rested upon the window-sill — doubtless the woman, then as now, had to do it — and then, like two frightened children, they ran away.

Later in the day, they returned, expecting to find the certificate thrown out upon the grass, but there it was, resting just where they had left it. They opened it — it had evidently been read, for across the top of it was written, 'If my daughter is such a *fool*, as to marry such a *man*, in such a *way*, I have no comment to make, and I hereby send them my blessing. (Signed) Wm. Merchant Richardson.' (Chief Justice of the State of New Hampshire.)

There was the old Timothy Dexter House upon the village street where the eccentric old man lived at one time, and shed a certain glory on the old town, largely through his self-appropriated title, for titles in those days were scarce — anyway in the New England Hills. The chief tradition about him, outside of his having sent warming-pans to the West Indies, was that he was thrashed in the Chester street, for some impertinence, by a citizen of the town. His house is now occupied at times by the Amos Tuck Frenches of Tuxedo.

Then there was the Richardson house, the home of Chief Justice Richardson, my child's maternal great-grandfather. There were a good many offspring daughters in the Richardson family, and a good many of both sexes in the French household over the way, and finally so many Frenches married so many Richardsons that there were not enough of the latter to go round, and my father Edmund went off to Washington and married my mother, which accounts for me in my reflected glory in these memories. They were all of them intellectual, mostly judges, district attorneys, and so on, and several of them drew and painted after the style of the day. There is much in their letters of visits to Boston and Washington, in-

augural balls and festivities, in which they seemed to take turns. In one old letter I find an aunt writing to her sister in Boston: 'There is a young man who writes for the Boston —— in whose weekly articles we are greatly interested. Some consider him over-liberal and extreme, but I read everything he says, and find something most unusual and inspiring in his ideas and his philosophy. His name is Ralph Waldo Emerson.'

Also a story of how a group of them, Judge French, Judge Richardson, Senator Bell, and several others bought an illustrated volume of Hogarth, and took turns in keeping it in the family as a circulating art gallery. In after years Judge French bought it in, so to speak, and shortly afterwards some one offered to buy it for three times what he paid for it, which, of course, he refused. In one of his letters to Dan in Italy he says, 'I always kind of suspected I should have an artist son who would want it.' For many years now it has reposed upon the table in Mr. French's writing-room at 'Chesterwood.'

Franklin Pierce, who was an intimate of both Major French and Judge French, was constantly at the house, and the latter writes to his brother in Washington, 'Pierce seems to have taken a great shine to Ann.' (This was Ann Richardson, whom he himself afterwards married.) 'He is very devoted, and follows her about everywhere.' And so Dan French, had he been sufficiently foresighted, might have been born in the White House!

There is a little picture of two of the aunts, Aunt Katie and Aunt Ariana, playing chess. They sat opposite each other in profile, fingering the chess-men; in the little capes and mitts, which they wore in the afternoon for dress; and I can see Aunt Ariana jump up every now and then and go

to the window, as they say she did, and exclaim, 'Sister, there's passing — there's passing!'

In an old book I find a paragraph, 'There was one parson, the Rev. Ebenezer Flagg, in Chester, our great-grandfather, I believe, who was so fond of the young people that he made it easy for them upon all occasions, and married all who came to him for that purpose.' The runaway couples in Vermont used to cross over in such numbers that Chester became a kind of Gretna Green, and they were called 'Flagg-marriages.'

The greatest treasure in the family was a portrait by Copley of one of the ancestors, a very early picture — Copley, I believe, began to paint at sixteen. It is a little boy of five, though no one would have recognized him as a child if he were not so labelled. He was dressed in Continental frock coat, stock and wig, and carried a small red book. Poor little tot! I hope his pride made up to him for being squeezed into this semblance of a little man! This little William Merchant must have grown up into a lively youth, for I find that he was one of the party which threw the tea into the Boston Harbor, and, in an old scrapbook, that he was one of the youths who started the Boston Massacre:

A few minutes after nine o'clock four youths named Edward Archibald, William Merchant, Francis Archibald and John Leach, Jun. came down Cornhill together, and separating at Doctor Loring's corner, the two former were passing the narrow alley leading to Murray's barrack in which was a soldier brandishing a sword of uncommon size against the walls, out of which he struck fire plentifully. . . . Archibald admonished Mr. Merchant to take care of the sword, on which . . . the soldier then pushed at Merchant and pierced through his clothes inside the arm close to the armpit and grazed the skin. Merchant then struck the soldier with a sharp stick.

THE TWO AUNTS PLAYING CHESS

Quite accidentally Judge French found this old portrait in the house of a relation down in Lowell. General Richardson seems to have been a cultivated man, but his wife was evidently of a simple and more provincial taste. She showed him with great pride her parlor, made over from its early New England austerity — on the whole I rather sympathize with her as to that — into a gold and brocade imitation of a Paris salon. The one thing of any real value, the Copley of our Revolutionary ancestor, she seemed to pass over with indifference. My uncle stood, gazing at it eagerly, conscious of the fact that it was dirty and streaky and sadly in need of renovation, while his hostess rambled along, and finally remarked sympathetically, 'The face is kind of sweet, isn't it? I often tell the General if he'd just let me have it painted over in modern clothes, and kind of childish, it would be real nice.'

Judge French, gasping but prudent, kept his emotions to himself, explained to her that it was in a very bad condition, and wondered whether she would let him take it home and have it looked after. To this, Mrs. Richardson eagerly agreed, thankful, doubtless, to have such a sore spot removed from her gold and brocade surfaces.

'I have it,' wrote the Judge to his brother in Washington, 'hanging upon the wall in my parlor. Don't ever mention it. Perhaps she will never think of it again.'

One day every spring Dan French and his father went up to Chester, stayed over two nights, and planted Grandma's garden. Dan always said it was a reflection upon ordinary country methods to see the way his father, a busy lawyer, a scientific farmer, planned that garden and put it

through in that short time, the helper, James Landigan, taking care of it in a few hours each week.

Dan was never greatly interested in farming, but he worked at it steadily enough, and the only thing I have ever known him to lay up against his father — and that only in a half-humorous way — was that he was obliged to get up and work before breakfast. It always made him feel mean, he said, and the older man could never quite understand why.

I have also heard him tell how upon one occasion his father came into his room in the middle of the night, and a thunderstorm, and asked him to go out and see to the barn door which was flapping in the wind. So he dressed himself and went out through the sheds into the barn. The first thing he did, of course, was to bang into the hayrick, and he went back fairly disgruntled. The next morning at breakfast his father told him that he had lain awake and listened to the barn door banging, realizing what havoc it would make if torn off its hinges, and thinking that in a moment he would get up and go and see to it himself. Finally, he decided that it was hardly dignified that he should go prowling around in the dark and rain, with a seventeen-year-old son asleep in the house.

He was always fond of his joke, and once when the two were putting on a storm door, the younger man at the top of the ladder paused suddenly — there seemed to be an alarming discrepancy between the end of the door frame and his foothold.

'Oh, go ahead, Dan,' cheered his father, 'it's safe, and anyhow I'd trust you where I wouldn't trust myself.'

The adolescent artist was fond of his life in the country, of stuffing birds, of hunting birds' eggs, of wandering in

the woods, rather than of work upon the farm in which his father was so interested. He says he remembers, with chagrin, one evening when his father took him out into the fields back of the house to talk over some questions which had to do with the crops, and only years later, he realized how little interest he must have shown and how absorbed he must have been in the beauty of the evening and the sunset.

Upon one occasion some members of the State Agricultural Society who were in Concord were giving an exhibition of various phases of farm work, and Judge French took his young son down to watch them and their experiments. Various men ploughed long lines across the field with, to Judge French's idea, no great success. He finally suggested that his son Dan could do as well as that. At this, Dan started in and drove the plough across the field with what he considered only tolerable success. He wanted to do it over again, but apparently he had made a hit. They all thought that he had ploughed an unusually straight furrow and were so enthusiastic that his father considered it unnecessary to try a second time, though he, himself, always admitted that his success was artistic rather than agricultural.

When Dan first lived in Washington, he used to like to tell some especially frivolous society girl about the time in his youth when he sold turnips on the streets of Boston. It seems that a young man on a neighboring farm was in the habit of making daily or rather nightly trips into Boston with loads of produce which he sold at the market. This seemed greatly to appeal to the young sculptor, only a boy at the time, especially as the wagon left before daylight, and upon one occasion his friend and neighbor told

him that he might come with him and see the sights. So they started off at three o'clock in the morning, the horses walking along through the beautiful suburbs of Boston with the half-grown boy, to whom it was all new, marvelling over the sunrise and the unusual sights at the break of day.

When they reached the market, the older boy backed up his cart and told his young assistant to sit there and watch things while he went off on an errand.

'If any one *should* want to buy anything, of course you could sell it; turnips so much, carrots so much, etc.'

In about twenty minutes he reappeared. 'Everything all right?' he asked.

'Oh, yes,' said Dan, 'I sold something.'

'What did you sell?'

'A peck of turnips,' announced Dan cheerfully, 'for nineteen cents.'

'That's good,' and his friend began to climb into the wagon. He stopped suddenly, 'Where's the measure?'

'Oh,' demurred Dan apologetically, 'the man took it off with him, and said he would bring it back later.'

And he used to say that the way that boy disappeared around the corner, and after a moment came running back grasping that measure in his arms, made him feel that his first venture in bargaining had not been entirely successful!

One of our aunts, Aunt Helen, a friend of our childhood, was rather a character in the old house and lived there for many years after the others had passed on. She was intellectual, witty, most interesting, but cared more for worldly things than had been the habit of the family.

Once, when Dan was telling this turnips story to a group of young people, my aunt sat listening, then she turned

to me, and, with a little patient expression, as if she could hardly stand it, she said, 'I shouldn't think Dan would tell that story. Sometime it might be misunderstood.' Which we young people considered rather more of a joke than the original story.

Our Aunt Helen was, however, a brilliant woman and always a joy in the family circle. She wrote to her niece on one occasion: 'Maria B—— died and I hastened down to her funeral, hoping that her age would be divulged as is usual upon the coffin plate. But alas! she guarded her secret even in death. If she had had a niece like you, a possessor of all the superfluous and embarrassing knowledge of the family circle, it would have been blazoned forth to the world.'

In one of her letters she says that her 'late-in-life' husband had been busy for a week at the sheds at the back of the house. 'They are at last finished, a continuous and unbroken line from the house to the barn, and Mr. Cochrane is triumphant — the cow can now walk into the kitchen in rainy weather without wetting her feet.'

In 1902 the old home burned to the ground one winter night, carrying most of our memories of Chester with it, and the old lady, having lived in it for over seventy years, was unable to survive, and went down to join the 'Betseys' and the 'Gershoms' in the cemetery at the end of the street.

CHAPTER VIII

MRS. FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

Those years in Washington, after I had grown up, were happy enough at the time, and happy enough as I look back upon them, but they were certainly not a period during which I either achieved greatness or had greatness thrust upon me; a perfectly commonplace existence with only glimpses now and then of the great events or the great people who make it in any way worth recording; fleeting glimpses of celebrities, of Presidents, and of official life, which appealed to me for the moment, but which, with the heedlessness of youth, I promptly forgot: Frances Hodgson Burnett, Mrs. Kate Chase Sprague, George Kennan, Mrs. Cleveland, Peary.

My brothers were growing to manhood, scattering to the four corners of the earth, and Washington had lost some of its Southern character, save for the darkies, of course. As long as I lived there, my life was intimately and humorously associated with the darkies — old Uncle Harris, old Uncle Lloyd, Aunt Sarah, and so on.

My cousin Dan, before he settled permanently in Concord and Boston, as he did later, spent the first two winters after his return from abroad in Washington, where his father had already found him a studio. He lived with his family in the old house of the beautiful aunt — for the dear Major of my early days had long ago passed on —and it was there that I became acquainted with him, though I saw him but little, being still in the seclusion of my con-

vent school. Artists were rare in Washington in those days, and especially sculptors — rare and romantic — and it seemed quite natural to me that he should be invited to everything from the White House down. I suppose he went about, more or less, but very little compared to most of the young Washington men whom I knew, because, he said, it interfered with his work.

I remember, on one particular occasion, when he insisted on going back to Boston, my young aunt and I urged him, begged him, to stay for a German, which she was giving, my first, and how cross it made us that he disregarded our pleadings and went off to Boston and to business. Indeed, after all these years, when I stop and think about it, it makes me cross even now!

However, during these next years, his father's letters are full of references to his life and to his work, also of the mildly interesting life in Washington. The two brothers — what a long list of Presidents they knew, from '33 to about '85, for, within a few years of the Major's death, his brother Henry came and took up his abode in Washington.

There was a great bond between this father and son. The father's advice was of the pleasantest kind. 'Do you want a suggestion? No, of course you don't. Well, here it is.' And on the part of the younger man, just back from the charm and romance of Florence, a desire to make good for the sake of the older man waiting at home; also a great community of interests, the study of art, the love of humor, and beauty wherever they found it, especially beauty of the human face and form.

'How you Frenches' — Mrs. Preston used to say — 'how you Frenches find handsome and agreeable women wherever you go!' And Judge French's comment to his

son was, 'Of course we do; there are affinities all through nature.'

He was always humorously urging him to marry and settle down, often picking out girls for him.

'Why don't you hurry up? Janet will be tired of waiting'; or, 'I haven't any particular girl to recommend to you at just this moment.'

'We think your photograph,' he writes, 'not very good. Pamela says you hold your nose too high, and Sarita says it is not handsome enough. In vain I tell them that you have grown homely. *Of course* Dolly is lovely, and *of course* you found it out too late — on the day of her wedding.'

At one time he urges him not to let people Jew him down; not to work for less than his price; which was good advice, for the expenses of sculpture were, and still are, but ill-understood. 'Doubtless,' he writes upon one occasion, 'they will expect you to make them a present of the statue and me to give them the pedestal.'

Now and then I came in for a compliment, but only in the background. In those days, I was called 'Mamie,' and, though it would grate upon me now, I never thought of it at the time, for everybody was 'Mamie' and 'Kittie' and 'Willie.'

'We are going,' he writes, 'to All-Souls' to-morrow to hear the music. Mamie will be there, because Richardson [Chief Justice Richardson] has invited her to sit in his pew regularly — "simply as an ornament," he tells me.'

At another time, though I regret that I read of it only many years afterwards: 'Mamie looked outrageously handsome when I met her yesterday making calls'; by which I suppose he referred to my hat and my elaborate

hair. In later years, when I used to remonstrate with my child about *her* hair, her answer was, 'Well, at any rate, it doesn't make me look homely and forlorn.' And so history repeats itself, and that little comment makes me much more lenient to this obstreperous younger generation.

For fear of the accusation of vanity — if vanity there be in recalling the charms of one's youth, long since forgotten — I must be honest and tell at least one of the uncomplimentary compliments of those early years. I wandered, one day, when I was about twenty-three years old, into a candy shop on Pennsylvania Avenue which served, in some small measure, as the modern tea-shop. Every one went there in the late afternoon for candy or soda. I noticed that one of the girls behind the counter watched me studiously and constantly. This, with the confidence of youth, I accepted as admiration either of my looks or my clothes. Later, when she handed me my box of bonbons, she said affably:

'Is this Miss Mamie French?'

I admitted graciously that it was.

'Well,' she said, 'don't you remember me? My name's Carrie Hurd, and I used to know you years ago up in Herndon.'

I did faintly remember, 'way back when I was perhaps fifteen or sixteen and used to visit in Virginia, that there was in the neighborhood a family of boys and girls by the name of Hurd, though I hardly knew them, and I should never have recalled her; still I bowed again most graciously, and admitted that I remembered her and her brothers and household.

'Well,' said she, with deep satisfaction, 'I thought the minute I saw you in here, about a week ago, that I knew

you, and I asked somebody and they said, "Why, that's Miss Mamie French of Capitol Hill." I knew you,' she said, nodding her head wisely, 'I kind 'a' knew you as soon as I saw you, but law, Miss Mamie, how you has fell off in looks!'

Surely a left-handed compliment and a joke which one could tell and laugh at all her life!

The darkies, on the other hand, were always complimentary. 'I 'clars to goodness, Miss Mamie,' old Uncle Lloyd used to say — 'I 'clars to goodness, you suttinly does lay over an' above all the young ladies round 'bout heah.' The best of us melt at the assumption of our superiority handed out to us in the confiding manner and the mellifluous tones of an adoring servitor.

I first heard of Uncle Lloyd when I was eighteen or twenty, on the occasion of my mother giving a black gown to the still blacker chambermaid. It was too big for her, and Diana asked if 'Miss Magit' would mind if she sold it.

'No,' agreed my mother, 'you can sell it and keep the money.'

And a few days later, Diana came to her, a broad grin on her ebony face.

'Ah done sole de dress, Miss Magit.'

'That's good,' said my mother; 'to whom did you sell it?'

'Why, Ah sole it,' beamed Diana, 'to old Mistah Lloyd Henry fer to lay his wife out in.'

'Oh,' my mother sympathized, 'is she dead? Poor thing, I'm sorry.'

'Well, no,' admitted Diana, 'Ah cain't rightly say she's daid, but she's awful sick an' he's gwine lay her out in it.'

But Aunt Sarah didn't die. She was much younger than her husband, and she got well, and wore the dress to church off and on for a long period of years, and also became an intimate friend of our family. She was a wonderful worker and a faithful, gentle, and devoted creature. To be sure, she was drunk a good deal of the time; as one of her gentlemen friends remarked, 'Sary Lloyd, she's a berry nice lady, but she will get drunk.' But unless she was very, very drunk indeed, she did her work well, and satisfied all of us. She cooked better than anybody, and spoiled the children, and one of my brothers used to say that he had rather have Aunt Sarah drunk than any half-dozen of the other negroes sober about the place.

She was quite beautiful, old Aunt Sarah, blacker than the proverbial ace of spades, with the flat nose of her race, but otherwise fine features. My artist cousin used to say that she ought to have been stood under a mantel with her arms up and cut in black marble for a Nubian Caryatid. When we repeated this to her, she seemed not greatly taken with the idea, and I'm sure she always thought we were calling her a Katydid. She had a rare smile, and a voice that would charm the quills out of a porcupine. I can hear her now, wheedling the pet cow who lived in the shed at the foot of the garden.

'Come on, Ara-*bel'*-la' — her voice mellifluous and confiding. 'Ara-*bel'*-la, come on. I ain't gwine hurt yer. I'se yer friend. Now be good girl, Ara-*bel'*-la, please come on.' And Arabella always came, as did we all of us.

She would go for months, sometimes, perfectly straight, and then, with all the washing in the tubs out in the kitchen yard, she would disappear, and there would be great excitement as to who could finish the clothes, wash and

iron them, for a week's wash in those days was much more of an undertaking than it is now.

I remember another time, when we were having a family party of fifteen or twenty, on the side lawn, and the cry had gone forth an hour or two before supper that Aunt Sarah was off on a spree, and we had all worked, cutting ham, fixing salads, carrying things back and forth, for she was a general and took charge of everything when she was sober. We were all eating the products of our afternoon's work, and just beginning to have a good time, when somebody said, 'Look!' And there was Aunt Sarah leaning over the fence, her two elbows resting comfortably upon the pickets, and her bonnet, which she wore only at such times, and which the boys called her 'jag bonnet,' because of the bedraggled feather which had a way of turning around and dancing down into her eyes. There she stood, with the most divine expression on her face. 'My Lawd!' she called to us, 'but ain't yo'all having a good time!'

And Harriet, whose 'face was black,' so she sometimes reminded us — whose 'face was black, but whose heart was white' — who lived with us eighteen faithful years, the devoted slave of my mother and her children, and who, after an absence of many, many years, came back unexpectedly into our lives. She married, and after my mother's death, for certainly thirty years we lost sight of her. Then one day my sister, who had gone back to Washington to live, noticed, upon Pennsylvania Avenue, a woman standing gazing into a shop window. She was little, and old, and black, but erect and spry and wore big goggles.

Almost before she realized what she was doing, she touched her upon the arm.

'Is that you, Harriet?' she asked.

The little woman turned, threw up her hands, precipitated herself upon my sister's breast, and embraced her.

'Fo' de Lawd's sake, Miss Daisy!' she cried. 'Please fo'give me, but you done took me so by s'prise that Ah don' know what Ah's doin'.'

A few days later she turned up at the hotel where my sister was living.

'Ah'se gwine give up my place, Miss Daisy,' she announced, 'an' Ah'se gwine to live with yo'.'

'Indeed you're not going to do anything of the kind,' said my sister. 'I'm living here at an apartment hotel. I can have my meals downstairs when I want to, and I like a little light housekeeping.'

The next week Harriet turned up again, her face thin and old, but eager, her figure as erect and quick in motion as if she had been twenty instead of seventy.

'Well,' she announced cheerfully, 'Ah done give up my job, Miss Daisy.'

'Now what on earth did you do that for?' admonished my sister severely.

'Why did Ah do it? Why, Ah did it cause Ah'm comin' to live with yo' and take care of yo'.'

'But I don't need you,' protested my sister. 'I can't afford to have a maid.'

Harriet sat down stiffly upon a chair and crossed her hands complacently.

'Yo' doan has to 'ford me,' she announced. 'Ah'se got it all fixed. Ah'se comin' to yo' three days a week an' take care of yo'. An' yo'se gwine to pay me a dollar a day.' She put up her hand and nodded her head severely. 'Ah knows what Ah'm talkin' about. Yo' can 'ford that, 'cause Ah can save yo' that much. Doan yo' bother 'bout

money, chile. Ah'se here, an' Ah'se gwine to stay, an' Ah'se gwine to take care of yo' the rest of yore life.'

So she came three days a week and did home cooking for 'her chile,' and when she had made the chicken into a roast, and a pie, and a salad, and stewed the bones into a soup, she took the rest home with her, and used it as a kind of a 'charm' to season the food for herself and her husband.

Later, when I saw her, and thanked her for her devotion, and told her how glad I was to have her there with my sister, she stood and looked at me and meditated a moment.

'Well, Miss Mamie,' she said, 'when Ah seen Miss Daisy stan'in' there on the Avenue, it all come back to me, how good your mother was to me. Ah never had no mother in my life 'ceptin' her, an' when Ah began to think 'bout it — Ah see what my duty was, an' Ah done it.'

And there she has stayed for the last few years, taking care of my sister, coming in town — an hour's trip each way on the trolley, saving, pinching, doing what she felt was her duty, wearing two or three flannel petticoats, and high leggings, and a cap under her hat, so that 'she never had a sick day in her life,' happy herself, and making every one happy around her.

On one occasion a friend of my mother was very anxious to see the colored service, so I took her to the big church uptown — I have forgotten the name — as being more imposing and interesting than the small one near at hand. With their usual kindliness, seeing strangers, white people, they led us up the aisle and gave us the very front seat, where my friend was immediately deeply interested, in fact, so interested, at times so shaken with smothered

laughter, that I was afraid we might be asked to retire. Fortunately, however, the congregation were too absorbed in their own doings to notice.

The minister stood in a very high pulpit, we gazing up at him when we dared to lift our faces. Just below him, on a shelf, which seemed to be part of the reading-desk, stood a common white porcelain pitcher filled with flowers. He would grow eloquent, stretch forth his arms, raise his voice, and then, having worked himself up into a fever, would fumble around for the pitcher, slide his fingers down into it beside the flowers, let them rest in the water a minute, then still holding forth, almost unconscious of what he was doing, would draw them out, and dry them somewhat surreptitiously upon a handkerchief. This was all done quite unconsciously. It was as simple and instinctive as the impassioned story which he poured forth upon our unsuspecting heads.

'When de Lawd he riz up from de daid,' he said, with closed eyes and uplifted face — 'when de Lawd he riz up from de daid, who'd he 'pear to? He 'peared — to — Mary Magdalene. Dat's so, he 'peared to Mary Magdalene. He didn't 'pear to no man.' Suddenly he opened his eyes and squinted down at the congregation. 'He didn't 'pear to no man. He 'peared to Mary Magdalene. *He* knowed what he was 'bout. Mary Magdalene, she was a woman! He knowed, if He 'peared to a woman' — a long pause — 'it'd be all over town 'fo' night!'

But besides the darkies of whom I always think when I go back to those early days, and besides the dear family circle, there were others — celebrities — of much interest to the public at large.

Perhaps the one who was most of a celebrity at that time, and whom I knew best, was Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett. She was the intimate friend of my young aunt, and with her I was constantly at the house. She had just written 'That Lass o' Lowrie's' and had come to Washington to live. The book had made a furor. She had money, suddenly and in plenty, and was pretty, and probably the most-sought-after woman in the literary world. Later she grew somewhat heavy, and gave the appearance of being short. I remember when I first saw her seated, I thought of her as a rather large, imposing figure, but later, when she rose to her feet, I was surprised to find how short she was — not undersized, but much less imposing. My brother-in-law remarked that it was always surprising to see Mrs. Burnett 'get down' from her chair.

During those early years, however, she was a charming personality; a great deal of wonderful reddish hair, the delicate skin that goes with it, and a childishly naïve manner, the quality of which we feel in her books, of perennial youth, and which always clung to her, to those who knew her best. People were crazy about her. All the celebrities who came to Washington, either Americans or foreigners, statesmen, men of letters, were there on her evenings at home, and, as my young aunt was her most intimate friend, I saw more or less of these gatherings, though I was young enough to be kept rather in the background.

In fact, the great night, when Oscar Wilde was a lion at her house, I was not allowed to go, at least I was not even thought of. Dear Mrs. Burnett was always so kind that she would have done anything to give me pleasure, but I was so young that it probably never occurred to any

one that I would appreciate meeting this man, whose name was on everybody's lips in two continents. So I stayed at home and was thrilled to hear about it from my aunt.

The name of Oscar Wilde was, at that time, almost like a topical song. Gilbert and Sullivan, in 'Patience,' had made him and his cult so famous that everybody on every street corner knew about him. He was here lecturing, and, while there was a great deal of amusement and laughter at his expense, his poetry had attracted serious attention, and every one flocked to see him. He was the first to wear knee-breeches, his long hair parted in the middle, his long sallow face and rather stooping figure, and even the imitations of it, of which the country began to be full, were recognized everywhere. I think we came hardly to know which was which, the pictures of Wilde himself or of his double, Bunthorne, Gilbert and Sullivan's inimitable caricature of him. Young men dressed like him — the knee-breeches, the velvet coat, the flower, became a cult.

'As I walk down Piccadilly
With a poppy or a lily
In my medieval hand,
And every one will say,
As I take my mystic way,
If this young man expresses himself
In terms too deep for me,
Why, what a very singularly deep young man
This deep young man must be!'

Can't you see him that night in Mrs. Burnett's drawing-room, standing beside the fireplace beside his hostess, his black satin knee-breeches — probably the only pair of knee-breeches in America at that time — silk stockings and ruffled shirt, pumps, and a stiff flower in his button-

hole, not a sunflower — that, I believe was only used in the caricatures; the flattened hair, curling out over his ears, that long sallow face, and the people being taken up to be presented to him!

A little Washington débutante came across the room, held out a closed fan upon the end of which rested a tiny frosted cake.

'Here is food for you — and the gods, Mr. Wilde,' she said somewhat pertly, implying, of course, that he was too ethereal to want solid food.

My aunt said that he watched the girl a moment, and then smiled his rather languid, charming smile.

'Run away, little girl,' he said gently, as if he were speaking to a small child — his voice was very beautiful. 'Go back to the dining-room and eat your supper.'

In Boston, where he was to lecture, the Harvard students, then as now eager to play a joke on any one — and certainly Oscar Wilde was an appropriate subject for jokes — came to the theatre, occupying two front rows in the orchestra, every man of them in knee-breeches and buckles, large sunflowers in the lapels of their black velvet jackets, their hair parted and plastered down on each side of their faces, and each posing in the most woe-begone and poetic attitude. How the object of this criticism got wind of what was going to happen, no one knew, but when the curtain went up, and for the moment the stage was bare, the whole audience listened, eager with excitement, breathless.

From the door at the back of the stage suddenly appeared a slender young man, rather tall, very erect, his hair brushed back, just like ordinary young men, in the most immaculate of evening clothes — from top to toe

PHOTOGRAPH OF OLD FAITHFUL GEYSER AND SKETCH FOR DANIEL FRENCH'S GROUP

dressed like the most advanced and dignified Boston gentleman, or college student.

He stood silently, thoughtfully, his head on one side, for a moment, and gazed down upon the two rows of Bunthornes in the audience, and when he spoke, it was gently, pensively, that he said, 'I am very much pleased to see that the small seed that I have had the honor to sow has borne its fruit'; and then quietly, entirely master of the situation, proceeded with his lecture.

It must have given him a thrill for many a year to get ahead, publicly, of a critical audience of two entire front rows of Harvard freshmen.

The next time I saw him was in Paris some fifteen years later, and he was dressed, alas, just like anybody, and had grown fat. For one who had known him, or even known his photographs, in the days when he was a cult, it was incredible. He came to see us and was simple and natural, and most agreeable, but he had quite lost his personality. When I read his writings, many of them, and especially the 'De Profundis,' which was supposed to dip down into his soul, I am conscious of the terrible lack in the depths of the man, but I was not conscious of it then in Paris. He was a simple, natural, artistic gentleman, and I have been glad since, through all the revulsion of feeling against him, that I can remember him so.

I seem to have digressed a long way from Mrs. Burnett, but that is because she introduced me to so many interesting digressions. My young aunt Sarita, as I have said, was her most intimate friend, and they were constantly at each other's houses, and she used to call her, Sarita, 'Mr. F.'s aunt,' because my cousin Dan, and his young aunt — aunt by marriage — were very intimate. There is a book

somewhere, with an inscription on the fly-leaf, 'To Mr. F.'s Aunt, from "That Lass o' Lowrie's"' — though the younger generation might not take great interest in that weird character in 'Little Dorrit,' called always 'Mr. F.s' Aunt,' whose face looked like a doll that a child had hammered with the bowl of a spoon, and who made irrelevant remarks, which have lived for the Dickens lovers through the years.

She wrote 'That Lass o' Lowrie's' to help put her husband through an especial course at the Medical College, and found herself, in consequence, famous and comparatively rich. It was about that time, on the crest of her popularity, that she came to Washington, and captivated all the world by this wonderful charm.

She was brilliant, not so much in her wit or conversation as in her grace and enthusiasm, and the childish naïveté which people who knew her always felt. She was very devoted to her children, the two little boys, Vivian and Lionel, whom she dressed in Little Lord Fauntleroy costumes, and which immediately became the rage. She was very near to them, not perhaps in the practical, everyday care of physical things, but in her unbounded sympathy and spirits, and her childlike joy in their games. As she grew older, and used to the admiration with which she was surrounded, and also owing to the fact of added weight, her personality, at least in public, seemed to undergo a change. She was sometimes vague and absent-minded, less spontaneous, and people who did not know her wondered what her intimate friends meant when they spoke so enthusiastically of her charm. Poor woman! She was doubtless bored to death at times, even though she loved it — this constant publicity and indiscriminate

attention from all the world. She had a little quiet way of sitting in a big armchair, looking gentle and smiling, but saying little, entirely different from the sweet responsiveness which she showed in intimate conversation.

Her friend, Miss Brandt, who lived next door, used to tell a story, illuminating, not only as to Mrs. Burnett, but as to others who possess in any degree the literary or artistic temperament. Some cousins who were most anxious to meet Mrs. Burnett came over one afternoon to see Miss Brandt. They would do anything, wait any time, or come back on any occasion for a chance of just a glimpse of her. Poor Miss Brandt was terribly worried. She knew how bored Mrs. Burnett would be, and made every possible excuse, but her friends were insistent. Of course they didn't want to intrude, but they could come on any day.

But presently the scene began to work out as a scene sometimes does, as if it were in a play. Miss Brandt's nieces and nephews came piling into the room accompanied by the little Fauntleroys, grabbed as much cake as they were allowed to have, went over and seated themselves in front of the open fire, and in a few minutes the front door was heard to open and Miss Brandt knew, from the voice and footstep, that Mrs. Burnett was coming. She came into the room, her coat thrown open, her furs, her veil, a little dishevelled in true literary fashion — her gloves and her wraps were always apt to be falling off. She had been walking and was slightly flushed, but as she saw who was there and joined the group, her manner became impersonal.

The three guests, who were quite young women, could

hardly conceal their enthusiasm. They leaned forward and tried to hang upon her words, although her words, or even her glances, were few and irrelevant. Her friend, Miss Brandt, tried to draw her out, but, as the three guests leaned more and more eagerly forward, Mrs. Burnett grew more and more absorbed in her inner thoughts, whatever they were, and looked more and more patient and inexpressive.

'Oh, dear,' said Miss Brandt as she told us about it afterwards, 'I was so cross that I could have cried. I felt like shaking Frances as I thought how these three would-be admirers would go back to Paris and say that Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett was stupid and heavy and uninteresting.

'Then suddenly, the children in front of the fire began calling to her, and my littlest niece jumped up, ran over to her, and said:

'"Oh, Aunt Frances! Aunt Frances! Tell us a story, do tell us a story."

'In a second her face changed. She rose, dropped her gloves and her wrap, and saying, "Oh, excuse me," in a suddenly happy, childlike manner, was led by the child back to the group in front of the fire. She sat down upon the floor, fortunately with her face turned toward us. The children hung upon her, held onto her hands, her dress, gazed up into her face, and in a moment she was deep in all kinds of elfish, childish talk, telling them "une petite histoire," laughing, petting them, her face, her whole figure radiant, absorbed, the expression of humor, of fear, of mystery flitting across it, reaching out to them, and each expression reflected in the small faces about her. She had forgotten her audience; she was a little child, a

sprite, an elf, in a group of other little elves, seeking adventure in the world of fancy.

'And those three young women went — she even forgot to be formal when she rose from the floor to say good-bye to them — they went away and in all probability said that Frances Hodgson Burnett was the most inspiring creature — just the way they knew she would be from her books.'

Mrs. Burnett's Tuesday evenings were interesting gatherings, but the thing which I remember best was the dance late in the evening, and the good time which we all had then. All kinds of interesting literary people were there, and all kinds of diplomatic people, but the one outstanding person, of whom — having been a most frivolous young person at that time — I always think, was General Hatch, the Indian fighter. He was no longer young, having spent the greater part of his life on the frontier, and we loved to gather about him and hear his accounts of the Indians, of whom, by the way, he thought pretty well.

He was tall with a splendid figure, perfectly white hair and boyish eyes, and we used to love to tell the girls about him and then present them to him. They expected to see a wild Westerner with long hair and a bowie-knife, and it was fun to watch their surprise when they beheld this elegant person — one of the handsomest men I have ever seen, with the most simple and engaging manners.

He wanted to learn how to dance, said the Indians had forgotten to teach him to dance; so, after the literary people and the conventional people had gone away, we stood him up in front of the fireplace and showed him the most modern and intricate steps, and I remember how those two brilliant women — Mrs. Burnett and my aunt — used to go off in gales of laughter at his efforts!

Every now and then, in after life, I used to meet Mrs. Burnett somewhere, and we would always begin just where we had left off in those Washington days.

Long years afterward, in 1925, I think, just a few months before her death, I heard that she was at the Grosvenor in lower Fifth Avenue. I went in and telephoned up to know if she would receive me, and the maid came back to the telephone and said, 'Mrs. Burnett says for Mrs. French to come straight upstairs.' She came hurrying in, wearing a tea-gown. She must have been seventy-five at the time, but she might have been any age. 'Why think of age?' she said. 'I never let the thought of age or failure come near me. I just keep going forward in my work and in my thoughts.' All these years she had kept intact that sweet childish joyousness which had so charmed in her youth, and which all the world had loved in her writings.

We sat down in the sitting-room where she was making Christmas things for her grandchildren, and had a real heart-to-heart talk about old times — the distinguished people, my brilliant aunt, and especially teaching General Hatch to dance.

'I ought to have been a dancer,' she said, laughing. 'I did not have much chance of that in my youth. I should love to have been an elf and have spent my life dancing with elves in the woods.'

And how funny the children were — the two little Fauntleroys — looking like princes, and acting like imps! How they went into the dining-room before a dinner party, and knocked the dinner table into a cocked hat, and made themselves ill for half the night by eating up the bonbons and the centre-piece; how on Sundays when they

had ice cream, which they had about fifty-two Sundays in the year, they met each visitor with a gleeful 'Ice cream! Ice cream! Ice cream to-day!' Or when company came accidentally for luncheon, and they happened to have eggs — 'We had them about five days in the week,' she said plaintively — 'they wiggled and jumped up and down in their chairs and whispered to each other, "Eggs! eggs! ain't yer glad?" and gave the impression that we lived upon bread and water.'

'Why, I haven't thought of these things for years,' she laughed merrily, 'and I am sure that no one but you and I would remember them.'

She had just published 'The Head of the House of Coombe,' and she told me about it; about the process of writing, almost with glee, how they had to publish 'Robin' as a separate book.

'They had got me started, and I couldn't possibly stop. I must get it all in. They say — some people say — it is sentimental. Well, what if it is? Life is sentimental, for those who have any sentiment in them. They used to like sentiment, and they will like it again. This horror of sentiment is just a phase; why cater to a passing phase?'

A few days later, on a Sunday afternoon, she came to the studio, where some other people were coming to tea. She came early and stayed until the last person had left. She sat in a high-backed chair, dressed very handsomely in grey, and every one was delighted to go and be presented to her. She was not in the least bored or detached that day. 'It's just like old times,' she said, 'to be with old friends, and the memories of the people and the things which we both have loved.'

The next I heard of her, it was all over. She had gone, while still at her best in her writing and in her love of humanity, leaving behind her — to all who had in their hearts some glint of her vision of life — the eternal joy of the child.

CHAPTER IX

PEARY AND OTHERS

The letters from Judge French to his son Dan go on through all those years in Washington. At one time he writes, when Dan was having a large marble of the 'Endymion' brought back from Italy, 'I suppose I could arrange to have it classified as an antique, but I don't like to interfere with laws which have been for so long a time a part of the Constitution.'

When Dan first came back from Italy, he had received an order for some work for the St. Louis Custom House, and I remember his working upon it in his studio there in Washington. There must have been some comment — every one who has lived in Washington knows that there is always comment — about his having worked for the Government while his father was in public life, and in one of the letters he says, 'Bill says the "Gazette" will be lurid to-day with disclosures about you and your nude female models' — this greatly to the amusement of the family.

About one girl, who was altogether charming, and whom they both admired, he wrote constantly.

'I don't see another like her, and if you have any spunk at all — but then she's enough sight too good for you — and, as far as I can see, she has never even kept your photograph upon her bureau. And Marion says, as your hair grows thin, all the young women will forget you.'

At one time, Dan's friend, B. C. Porter, had painted a portrait, a very handsome picture of Miss Howe, which

with French's portrait, by the same artist, and half a dozen others, was sent to Washington, and put upon exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery.

Judge French was greatly interested in these, as he was in all of Porter's pictures, and one afternoon he sat himself down in front of them in the Gallery to enjoy them, and almost unconsciously found himself listening to the comments of the passers-by. The portrait in the middle, of Maud Howe, Julia Ward Howe's daughter, with a large picture hat upon her head and a small dog in her arms, was greatly admired, and then suddenly he heard a voice say, 'Who's the man? I like him.'

There was a turning of leaves, a mumbling of half-whispered words, girlish heads evidently close together, and then, 'Why of course, Dan French, the sculptor! I know him. And it's just like him, so soft and peachy.'

Over this, Judge French chuckled with pleasure, and twitted his son about it for many a year to come.

Also those early years in Washington are reminiscent of interesting people. Mrs. Burnett, of whom I have already written, George Kennan, and especially of Peary.

George Kennan, the Russian traveller and writer, gave us all a thrill when he went off to the wilds of Siberia, which to us young people might as well have been to the moon. His articles in the 'Century Magazine' created a furor. We knew very little about Russia in those days, but some glimmer of the terrible things that were going on there had begun to leak out through the nihilists and Tolstoy's writings, and the world was beginning to prick up its ears.

George Kennan, at that time a young journalist, had been in Russia some years before, travelling in the suite of

a native prince. Just at that time some famous Russian refugee was lecturing in Boston when Kennan happened to be in the audience. He gave a most vivid and impassioned arraignment of a despotic government, at which Kennan rose, and though I understand he spoke moderately, made a defence of the powers that be, or that were at that time, in this great and absolute monarchy. He had travelled in Russia, and had seen something of Russian life, and he could not but feel that these stories had emanated from people who had doubtless suffered, but that such horrors were sporadic and not the consequence of a government policy. This defence of Russia was published everywhere, and ultimately reached St. Petersburg. Just about that time, it seems, the 'Century Magazine' became interested, as it was always interested, in subjects pertaining to the welfare of mankind. They decided to send some one into Siberia to investigate, and the man they asked to go was George Kennan. His wife was one of my dear friends, and it was a thrilling time when he left us to go off on what seemed to us, and what later proved to be, a most hazardous and dangerous adventure.

When he reached St. Petersburg and went to the Government with his credentials, it seemed strange that he should have been allowed to travel upon a trip of investigation, but from his account we gathered later that it was simple enough. What their State Department undoubtedly said was: 'If we don't let him go, of course every one will believe the stories of these escaping nihilists. On the other hand, here is a man who has contradicted many of these stories; he will only see what we want him to see; and it is better to take a chance than to raise too great a rumpus before the world.'

Accompanied by his friend, Mr. Frost, who was to take photographs, Kennan left St. Petersburg in the company always of some official of the Government, and it was not many days before he became convinced that conditions were entirely different from anything he had imagined, and that the stories he had felt called upon to refute were far from being exaggerated. He used to say that he and Frost were so outraged by what they saw that they made up their minds then that, if they lived, the world should know about it.

Of course it was an endless thrill to have Mr. Kennan come back after weeks of anxious waiting, to the little house on Massachusetts Avenue — to hear his accounts at first hand.

He was an interesting personality, tall and slight, wiry, with a prominent nose, and deep-set eagle eyes. He seldom talked about himself or the things he had done, except upon the lecture platform, and sometimes in the quiet of his family.

It was in reality long before this that I met Peary, but dates seem to be a dubious quantity in those early flashes of my memory. When he returned to Washington, in those years before the great discovery, he came now and then to our house. The first time that I ever saw him, he and his friend Burton came one evening to a house where I happened to be visiting, Mrs. Caswell's. I was sitting on the floor in front of the bookcase, looking for something, when the door opened and these two young men appeared. I tried so suddenly and violently to rise to my feet that the small bookcase toppled over, the books almost burying me beneath them. The two strange young men had to rescue

me, and ever afterwards joked as to which it could have been that had given me such an attack of heart failure at sight of him. To say the least, it was a very informal beginning to a long and close friendship.

Peary was tall and thin — so thin at that time as to look abnormally tall; not very straight, though he afterwards filled out and had a fine carriage. His friend Burton was a short, active youth, nothing very striking in his appearance, but with great charm of mind, manner, and personality. I was quite crazy about him, though he went off shortly and married a nice young woman friend of mine. Still he became only a professor at Tech, he discovered no poles, took part in no scandals, and so, who cared! There would be no possible excuse for writing about *him*.

Of course Peary was always crazy about discoveries; always said that he was going to discover the North Pole. And of course we empty-headed young people, his friends, paid not the slightest attention to his ideas or ambitions. I know this is contrary to what the biographers write about him, and it is just possible that he did not talk thus seriously to serious-minded people. It is also quite possible that our constant joking as to his jaunts about the countryside may have brought forth more intimate discussion than would have been likely elsewhere.

One of our great amusements in Washington was to go up the Potomac River, to the boathouse, and take little moonlight trips upon the water. I remember that Peary always wanted to explore. My ambition was to wear good clothes, dance at the boathouse, and splash about in the vicinity of the other boats full of young people, the more noise the better. But Peary always wanted to go up the

river where it was quiet and peaceful and romantic, to climb all the hills, either in the daylight or at night — looking for the North Pole, to be sure — and deriding me for wearing high-heeled shoes and for wanting to sit down and rest in every comfortable spot.

I remember, when I came home one day, my mother said: 'Bert Peary has been here, and he is really going to look for the North Pole. The money has been raised and he is going to start [I have forgotten the date] — most interesting! And he is coming to tell you all about it.' When he arrived, my friend Mary L—— and I received him with gales of laughter, and he was so nice and manly about it! His eyes twinkled and he treated us like amusing children.

He had very definite and clearly worked-out plans, so my brothers said, and sometimes, when he told us about them, we were briefly interested, but I think this was later. His idea was to go year after year, if necessary, live among the Esquimaux, get acquainted with them, learn to adapt himself to the frozen North, to the food, to the life generally, so that in time there would be no hardships, and each trip should take him, without great effort or fatigue, nearer and nearer to the goal. He was to wear the lightest kind of underclothing. At that time his ideas were experimental, but he was very sure of that.

'Of course if I could,' he used to say, 'I would go it alone. The man who is absolutely free is the man who is without impediments, free from discussions, from entanglements, from social complications. If I could be half Esquimau and half American, I should go entirely by myself. Of course in the Arctic this is not possible, but my idea is to follow it as nearly as I possibly can, to depend upon myself.' This in some small way explains the fact that at the last moment

some people thought he should have shared his glory with Bartlett. Peary was not ungenerous, but he was absolutely one-ideaed. It had been his dream, not only as sentiment, but as expediency, to arrive at the Pole alone.

When the time came for him to go, we tried to cheer him by recounting the discomforts awaiting him.

'Not at all,' he said. 'When you girls are sweltering down here in Washington, I shall be reposing comfortably on an iceberg, not even fanning myself.'

I saw him often after that. I went with him sometimes to Army and Navy Germans, and at one time he filled us all with envy by the marvellous sable lining of his military coat. We made a great fuss about it, and, though he would not give it to me as I urged him to do, he promised faithfully that he would bring me one on his return from his next trip. However, he married in the interval, and I suppose his wife would not allow him to keep his promise!

And then the news came, many years afterward, that the Pole had been discovered, and all the controversy about Peary and Cook. It was a tragedy, that, no matter how few believed it, for it took away the glamour of his coming home; the work, the vision of a lifetime, and then, at the last inspiring moment, to have to stop and defend and explain.

There was one little incident in connection with my friendship with Peary that was really a tragedy in my life, although my brothers were unkind enough to consider it a joke. He had said, laughing, years before, 'I'll send you a Christmas card from the North Pole.' And sure enough, one winter before his great discovery, somewhere in the region of Christmas, came a Christmas card which was a work of art. There were two sheets of rather small writing-

paper fastened together with a white thread, and on the pages of this pamphlet were pictures in black and white, and here and there a little color, of seals, and musk ox, and icebergs. The last page is the only one I remember, and that I can mentally see quite clearly.

In the upper right-hand corner was an iceberg, or mountain, and fields of broken ice; in the lower left-hand corner was an ice-field, and, reposing upon the edge, a baby seal. He was such a cunning little seal that I have always remembered him. Midway, and spread out upon the paper, were little flecks of dried seaweed, glued, one or two of them, into place. Across the top was 'Merry Christmas,' and at the bottom, 'R. E. Peary.'

It was very amusing and interesting, but I was not yet sufficiently appreciative of discoveries, and of North Poles, to take it seriously. The little brochure lay around the house with other Christmas cards, and every now and then, in after years, my mother used to say to me, 'You must put that card in a scrapbook and save it.'

Years afterward, after the discovery of the Pole, when I went back to Washington, I began a methodical search of the house, but it had disappeared. Very likely it is now ornamenting the mirror or the centre-table of some of our acquisitive colored dependents, but it had at least disappeared from all knowledge of the family. The brothers considered it a great joke that, after all these years, I should have been so distressed at not being able to find this neglected souvenir.

A witty friend of ours, Mrs. Frederic Crowninshield, and a teller of good tales, was challenged once by my husband.

'Why, it almost seems,' he said, 'as if your imagination must have run away with you.'

Mrs. Crowninshield meditated for a moment, a twinkle in her eyes. 'Well,' she said, 'I've always cal'lated, as we say in New England, that a story should leave me a little better than it came to me.'

I feel almost, as I write about this postal from the North Pole, as if the details might be challenged, but when I recall that my three brothers would corroborate it, one of them probably with amusement, I feel sure of my ground.

There were four houses upon Capitol Hill at that time which belonged to the French family. There was land attached to each of them, in my father's case a whole city block, which would have made us multi-millionaires but for the avaricious greed of one old man, who owned much more property than we did. His name was Green, and, when the British Embassy first came to Washington, they went about upon Capitol Hill, looking for a place to build. We were all thrilled at the possibility of that being made the fashionable end of town, but old Green, who owned the block next to my uncle's house, put such a large price upon it that the careful Britishers left him in the lurch, and, before we knew what was happening, had bought a piece of land at the other end of the town, 'way out upon Connecticut Avenue. This, alas! turned the tide of fashion.

As I look back upon our life there at that time, I should not have thought of Washington as being literary or artistic, and yet there must have been much of interest, much more of an atmosphere than could ever have existed in a larger city, and of course I was always in touch with Concord, and with my sculptor cousin, who came to Washington constantly on visits and injected a new art interest into our lives — especially into mine.

He had decided to settle in Concord, with a studio in Boston, in which he worked for a good many years, and it was here that he formed a friendship with Benjamin C. Porter, the young and handsome painter who was just starting out upon his distinguished career of beautiful portraits of beautiful women. This was a friendship which lasted until Mr. Porter's death, some twenty years later.

More formal social life in Washington I came in touch with, rather at the edges: the New Year's calling, the Inaugural Balls, the Presidential Reception, the official gatherings, which were always 'crushes.' We stayed at home on New Year's Day, the young girls and the older women collecting in groups at each other's houses, waiting, some of them even peeping out of the windows, for the first glimpse of the first caller, and counting eagerly all through the day — fifty, sixty, one hundred, one hundred and twenty-five — so as to brag about it in the evening when we gathered somewhere to finish up with a dance.

Especially attractive were the receptions at the house of my aunt, because the room was pretty and the different people who collected there to receive drew a great many beaux of all ages and all walks of life. At the back of the room was a large table with a great and elaborately frosted fruit cake; at the other end a large bowl of eggnog. There were other things to eat, but the fruit cake and the eggnog were a necessity. The calling began as early as eleven o'clock in the morning, and one of our amusements was to watch the first hacks as they arrived, struggling up to the sidewalk, often through piled-up snow, and the young men, descending in their dress coats and top hats, so early in the day. Nobody in Washington had much

money in those days, except officials or foreign ministers, and usually the young men clubbed together and hired a hack for the day, in many cases continuing through the evening.

To the great receptions at the White House we young people loved to go, partly because we saw a good many friends, but largely because of the variety of people, foreigners in gorgeous regalia — at least gorgeous for America; beautiful women with beautiful jewels; and all kinds of queer people in still queerer clothes. In the formation of the procession which led up to the President, I do not know what happened outside the front door, but just inside you fitted yourself into a huge serpentine line which edged slowly along, then turned to the right, moved close to the wall over towards the first door, through a small room, across the side hall, then, turning back upon itself, through room after room to the small blue parlor where stood the Presidential party. A slow and wearing journey! We young people loved it, but why older people, who had many interests in their lives, should have been willing to be flattened out into pancakes, I do not understand.

Especially one evening do I remember the passage through the great room of Mrs. Kate Chase Sprague, who was, I suppose, more of a professional beauty than had at that time ever been seen in America, with a beauty and a regal carriage which we called 'queenly,' but which no real queen ever has — unless it be our own Queen of Roumania. She would have been famous even without her beauty, for the position of her father, Justice Chase, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was at that time the most dignified position in the Capital. She was tall and slim — the universal art of being slim had not been discovered in those

days — with an unusually long white neck, and a slow and deliberate way of turning it when she glanced about her. Wherever she appeared, people dropped back in order to watch her. It was said that when she walked abroad in a small town of Switzerland or France, where she sometimes spent her summers, the people ran out of their cottages to admire her. In Washington she was always the first lady of the land.

There is a story that, when one of the Presidents took his seat, his wife decided upon Thursday, if I remember aright, for the reception day at the White House. As soon as some of their friends heard of their choice, they hurried to her and told her that they were afraid that she had made a mistake, that that was the day that Mrs. Sprague and the Chief Justice had had as their day at home for years.

'Why, my dear,' one of the visitors said, 'I'm afraid you don't understand. All the diplomats, all the great men of Washington go there. Sometimes even the President —— Why, nobody will come.'

And the lady of the Executive Mansion, on the eve of her social career, changed the day of the White House reception because, if her day clashed with the day of the Chief Justice and Mrs. Sprague, nobody would come.

Later, when I came to see her and to know more about her, it was at the time when Conkling was very devoted to her. He was Senator from New York, and one of the brilliant men of the country. I remember, suddenly, out of a clear sky, as it seemed to us young people, there was a scandal. The papers came out one morning in big headlines that Sprague had come home one evening, drunk, had found Conkling there, and had kicked him out. He had certainly taken a long time to discover him! The papers

KATE CHASE SPRAGUE

were full of it, everybody talked about it in the street cars and on corners. It was a terrible tragedy, and, even though her friends stood by her, it was the end of Mrs. Sprague's social career.

Roscoe Conkling was a picturesque figure, in a way, handsome, dashing, always in the public eye, with a long nose and the famous little curl in the middle of his forehead. He looked like a handsome, rather fascinating satyr. His political enemies called him a *poseur*, and I remember one little incident which certainly seemed to carry out this criticism; but if he were a *poseur*, he got away with it. I was in the gallery of the Senate with my young aunt, who was one of his admirers. Every one was watching him, hanging on his words. There was a recess, as there sometimes was in the middle of things, and Conkling, big, handsome, flushed with success, dropped into his chair for a few moments' rest.

With only a sign to me, my aunt suddenly left me, I wondering what was going to happen. In a few moments she came back and sat down, and together we watched one of the messengers enter the floor below and cross over to the desk of the man who had just been interrupted in his speech. In his hand was a long box, which he handed to Senator Conkling and which he in turn carefully opened. It was filled with long-stemmed pink roses. Conkling took out a rose, held it up, smelled it, touched it lightly to his lips, turned to the gallery, and nodded his head and the rose in our direction. I knew, of course, now, why my aunt had left the gallery.

In a few moments, another messenger boy appeared at the door of the gallery, came down the steps, and handed a note to my aunt. It was not an envelope, nor a sheet of

paper, nor a card. It was simply a piece of white paper, torn from a pad. Upon the outside was scribbled in pencil, 'Miss Brady.' She opened it and upon the inside, in a dashing handwriting, was, also in pencil:

Roses! And from you!
In hot haste,
CONKLING

The country was thrown into the wildest confusion by the announcement that Garfield had been shot, a quiet, dignified gentleman who had probably done as little in his life to deserve such an end as any man who ever lived.

Guiteau, the poor simple crank of a murderer, was for months in the jail at the edge of the town, and as our friend, Mr. George Caswell, was at that time commissioner of something, and had much to do with the jail and that neighborhood generally, I happened to hear a great deal about him. Guiteau had always been considered harmless and had a certain intelligence, but, as is usual with such people, an abnormal ego. He apparently lost what little mind he had possessed over the idea that he had a grievance: that Garfield had promised him an office which he had failed to give him; that if he was so unfair to him, he must be unfair to others, and a menace in so high a place. He was only a youth, and many people insisted upon feeling sorry for him, but there was small need to worry about his state of mind, for he was happy enough while in jail. George Eliot says, somewhere, that she never has any pity for conceited people because they carry their comfort along with them, and to Guiteau this most assuredly seemed to apply, as it does to all murderers of his class. He was un-

doubtedly a moron of a slightly unusual type, quite unconscious of the enormity of what he had done, and making the most of a gruesome kind of popularity of which he was the subject. People sent him flowers and fruit, wrote him sentimental letters, even poems, until Mr. Caswell put a stop to it, which was the only thing which greatly disturbed him.

The first morning after his incarceration, as Mr. Caswell strolled down the corridor towards his cell, one of the guards warned him, 'He'll want to shake hands with you, sir. He thinks he's done something heroic.' As the cell door was thrown open and the commissioner entered, the young man arose from his seat and put out his hand. He was not at all bad-looking, rather modest as to manner. After all, it is hard for a stunted, undeveloped brain to discriminate between a Charlotte Corday and an ordinary murderer.

The Commissioner, having been warned, stood with his hands behind his back, but later at various times he talked with the young murderer — the same old story, intelligent enough upon other subjects, one of those poor cranks who should have been shut up before a crime, instead of being hanged afterwards.

The night that Mrs. Cleveland was married, I remember well. There had been endless discussion, of course, before this marriage: the fact that she was so much younger than her distinguished husband, so unknown and so beautiful, but largely as to the propriety of the wedding being held at the White House. Some thought it undignified, but all were interested, agitated, thrilled at the prospect of this beautiful young creature who was to spring suddenly from

the quiet of a mid-western city into the limelight of the 'First Lady of the Land.'

We were seated upon the lawn of our house upon Capitol Hill, the same ugly square house with the bay window where my mother, to go back to an earlier chapter, had for so many years been occupied in 'raising her own rats and cockroaches,' when, about eleven o'clock in the evening, we saw Mr. John Philip Sousa coming down the street. He was in his showy dress uniform, as the leader of the Marine Band, and we were expecting him to come in and tell us about the wedding, for he was a neighbor and a school friend of my brothers'.

When he arrived abreast of us upon the street, he stopped and, scorning the long walk to the gate at the corner, threw one leg over the low iron fence, and, white trousers, gold braid, and all, vaulted over upon the grass, and hurried across the lawn to where we awaited him.

'*She's* all right,' he said, and, as some one threw a coat on the ground, he sat down and proceeded to tell us about the wedding; though it is rather a jumble, I must admit, what he told us that night, and what other people told us afterward.

Of course I heard, as all the world heard, all kinds of stories as to her charm and the things that she did those years at the White House. She was so young and pretty and gracious and spontaneous that, except with a few of the very crabbed, she escaped all criticism. I remember once, when she had a school friend visiting her, the story was that they found a lot of old bonnets and dresses in the attic, and these two girls dressed up in them and paraded around for the President and his friend — a human touch.

Meanwhile the time was going on and my years in Washington, which seemed like the first chapter of my life, were drawing to a close.

As to Judge French's letters, they were still full of humor, of devotion to his son's career, of interest in public life, but he realized that he could not stay there forever. 'I can go back,' he wrote, 'and settle down with equanimity to my asparagus and to art,' and in 1885 he closed his life in Washington and returned, for his last few years, to his old house, among his old friends in Concord.

Three years later, in '88, my cousin and I were married and went to live in New York.

CHAPTER X

NEW YORK SALONS AND SOME CELEBRITIES

We were married in Washington in July, a terrible time and place, to be sure, in which to marry, or to do anything, but if one will marry an artist ——

A few weeks before the day set for the wedding, which was to have been in June, my cousin wrote me, 'What should you think if I told you that even now at the last minute I must change my statue' — this was the Gallaudet which was to be put up at the Deaf Mute College outside of Washington — 'and I am afraid it will put off our wedding for a month.'

The rest of the letter was apologetic and contrite, but — 'Saint-Gaudens has been in and says that the legs are too short. Perhaps I should have known this without any one telling me, had I not been diverted by the prospects of approaching matrimony. However, when you can pin Saint-Gaudens down and get a real criticism from him, it is better than anybody's, and so what can I do except give the Doctor an inch or two more of leg, and meanwhile, what kind of a lover will you think me anyhow?'

Of course I knew well enough that, in sculpture, legs and arms and heads were always being cut off and jostled about, and there was nothing to do but accept it, so we picked out a nice hot day in the hottest city in the world, so to speak, and were married, and I went to New York to live.

Dan French had lived in New York only that last year before our marriage, having given up his studios in Concord and Boston. That first winter he had worked in that

of his friend, F. E. Elwell, in Eighteenth Street, while his new house in West Eleventh Street was being prepared for us. This house was most interesting and I loved it, but a home in a side street, with all the hustle and hubbub of a great city, with no intimate friends and no neighbors, seemed somewhat appalling to me after the easy-going life of Washington in which I had grown up. My husband knew already most of the literary and artistic people who afterwards made our lives interesting, but it took a little while for me to know who people were, and to get used to the hurried, slap-dash methods of a metropolis.

There were the Gilders, the Saint-Gaudenses, the Will Lows, the Dewings, the Kenyon Coxes, the Blashfields, William Dean Howells, the Martin Conways, and always Mr. French's old friend, Benjamin C. Porter, though as a painter of beautiful women he was led somewhat into the gayer walks of life. And at these houses, which were thrown open to us, there were all their friends, writers and painters from all over the world.

I really think, as I look back upon it, that Mrs. Gilder's house was more nearly a salon than anything it was ever my pleasure to know. There were others, but the Gilders were the ones I knew best and, I am sure, the most interesting.

Laurence Hutton's in West Thirty-Fourth Street was the meeting-place of world-famous and interesting people, but I knew it only in the later years of its existence, and Mrs. Hutton largely after her husband's death.

I have heard sometimes the home of Mrs. Paran Stevens spoken of as a salon, but never by an artist or a literary man. She was a kindly soul, and generous, but certainly far from an understanding one either in literature or art.

Her salons were evening parties where some distinguished foreign celebrity was stood up and all kinds of fashionable people presented to him. Her sister married our cousin George Richardson, of Lowell — of the family who wanted to dress up the little Copley boy in modern clothes; and when they were in New York, we always saw them, but I never went to Mrs. Stevens's evenings, though she was good enough to invite us and send us messages urging us to come. Mr. French cared but little for large social 'affairs.'

I remember a Frenchman saying to me once, with wonder in his eyes: 'I was taken to Mrs. Stevens's. The people who took me called it a "salon," but — do you mind if I speak frankly? — well, it was not in the least like any salon that I ever heard of abroad. It was more like a reception for — Carolus Duran, I think it was — a celebrity standing by his hostess, and of fashionably dressed, very charming people, being presented to him. A very nice party, but with no resemblance to a salon; practically no American men of distinction, no artists or literary men, no sitting about in groups, no discussions of literature, art, politics, or affairs, nothing *intime*, no brilliant wit; gorgeous gowns, and, to finish with, a banquet! Who ever heard of food at a salon?'

'Why don't you go to the Gilders'?' I suggested.

'Ah,' he said, 'I have a letter to her from her sister, Mrs. Bronson, but she is at present out of town.'

Mrs. Bronson's daughter, Miss Edith Bronson, had married the Count Cosimo Rucellai, of Florence, one of the great families of Italy, and she often sent some distinguished foreigner with a letter of introduction to her aunt.

Mrs. Gilder was a New-Yorker, and her relations and lifelong friends were of New York. The Sedgwicks, the

Tuckermans, the Frelinghuysens, the Van Rensselaers, the Morgans, were all habitués of the house, which gave it a cosmopolitan atmosphere, seldom possible in a New York salon.

I do not know whether the little Frenchman ever reached Mrs. Gilder's, but I wish he might have happened to be there on that immortal evening when Paderewski and Duse were both of the party. I remember exactly how Madame Duse looked. She sat upon the sofa in the front parlor, erect, her head slightly forward, a simple black evening gown, a scarf of lace which she drew somewhat restlessly about her shoulders, everything subordinated to the small white exquisite face, eager, fragile, with a glint of suffering in every flitting glance that swept across it.

There was never anything formal at the Gilders' in the way of supper, but always an air of hospitality, cold and hot drinks upon the sideboard, and sandwiches and light refreshments about, for people usually left at eleven or twelve o'clock.

One evening it was Paul Bourget. I remember how he looked, and just how he talked, but the conversation was in French and I very probably missed much of it.

Sometimes the rooms were full, American painters, sculptors, writers, almost every one in the room a name that you knew. Mrs. Gilder had a way of sending hints around when there was to be some one of unusual interest.

I remember the first evening I ever spent there. The rooms were full and I was crowded into a corner. Mr. George Parsons Lathrop invited me to sit beside him upon the edge of a desk while he told me the names of, and related bits of gossip as to the people moving about.

It was that night that we met the Robert Underwood

Johnsons, the beginning of a long friendship, and at their house we afterward met many of the distinguished people of the earth. Mrs. Johnson had a rare personality and a flair for bringing brilliant people together and making her dinners a success.

Sometimes there would be possibly only a dozen people, and that was the best of all. We would sit in a group in the front parlor, or later about an impromptu supper table, and listen to some one talk. Sometimes it was Poultney Bigelow, who used to tell us about his friendship with the German Emperor. Emperors and kings were not so common in those days as they are now, and the first-hand accounts were picturesque. Sometimes it was William Dean Howells whose 'Silas Lapham' was just then the rage. He was a small man, slightly stout, in no sense of distinguished appearance, but of great personal charm. I always remember how pleased I was, when he sat at my right at dinner in my own house, that he acted as if he really wanted to listen to *me* — I who had always thought of him as far-off and unapproachable.

Sometimes it was Kenyon Cox, who, my husband considered, spoke and wrote about art with greater authority than all the critics put together. Cox was not always gracious as to manner. He had a way of rather putting his foot in it of which he was quite unconscious, being devoted to his friends and of the kindest heart. Once, when a fellow artist spoke rudely, just before leaving the room, Cox turned to a friend — Chase, I believe — 'Why should a man speak like that?' he asked. And Chase's answer was, 'For God's sake, Cox, don't you know that *you* always speak like that?'

Also the story that at the Art Students' League where he

taught, he was sometimes blunt to the verge of rudeness. One day, when criticising a young woman's work, he pointed to a certain stroke which seemed especiallv to annoy him.

'What in hell did you do that for?' he asked.

The pretty young miss to whom he had thus spoken answered flippantly, 'None of your damned business!' which so appealed to him that he promptly married her and made her a most tender and devoted husband for the rest of his days.

Sometimes in the midst of these most informal talks at the Gilders', Mark Twain 'held forth' — which term applied to him, for he had a way of half shutting his eyes and chanting his story.

'There is a sentimental poet in the next room,' he explained, one evening, standing in front of us, 'and somebody presented me to her. I thought I knew her all right and so I said with my sweetest smile and in my blandest manner, "I am so glad to meet you. I have just been reading that book of yours. Funny? Why I laughed until I almost died!"

'I didn't know what had happened for a minute or two, but I knew well enough that I had said the wrong thing. I had been reading some funny poems, and I *had* laughed until I nearly died, but it was the wrong poet. This woman was a writer of sentimental, soulful verse. Her chin went up in the air, and her nose went up and up and up, until it stuck into the back of her head, and I thought I would come in here and talk with you for a change.'

At another time he told us another story which I never happened to hear from any one else.

'I was going downtown on the Elevated,' he said, 'and I

noticed a working man in one of the cross-seats facing me who seemed to be staring me out of countenance. He tried not to let me see what he was doing. His glances were at first furtive and stolen, but as time went on he grew so interested that he quite lost all self-control. He leaned forward, pinned his eyes upon my face, and just stared. Then he reached over, clapped his big hand upon my knee, and said eagerly, his simple, kindly face closer and closer to mine:

'"You know Mark Twain? You have heard of him? You have seen his pictures?" he asked eagerly.

'"Yes," I admitted, "I have heard of him. I have even caught glimpses of him occasionally."

'He continued to stare, pleased at my admission. "I thought you would," he said. "You are a New-Yorker. I thought you'd know about him."

'Then he straightened up slightly and watched me for a second, leaned forward confidingly, "Did any one ever tell you" — he paused and spoke with conviction — "Did any one ever tell you that you are the living image of him?"

'I nodded my head, trying to keep my face straight.

'"They did?" he cried. "They did?" his voice exultant. "Other people have noticed it? I knew they must have. The minute you came into the car — before you sat down — I thought to myself, 'That man looks like Mark Twain. I'll be darned if he don't!' I have never met the gentleman myself," he confided, "but I have seen pictures of him — lots of pictures — in magazines and papers, and I know just how he looks. And the minute I saw you I said to myself, 'That man is the living image of him.' I wondered if anybody ever told you before and I made up my mind I'd ask you."'

I was disappointed that Mr. Clemens did not tell this man who he was and give him his picture. I think the man deserved it.

There was one person whom I never remember having seen at the Gilders', and that was Saint-Gaudens. He may have been taken there sometimes as men allow themselves to be taken by their wives, but I am sure he never went to any gatherings of his own accord, though he was the most sociable and responsive of men and most entertaining. He hated being made a lion.

If I remember aright, it was out of this group at the Gilders' that there grew up the old Music Club which in those early years in New York we were invited to join. It was started, I believe, by Mrs. Gilder, Mrs. Pierpont Morgan, Mrs. Henry Holt, George Vanderbilt, and those two tall beautiful Minturn girls, who would have lent distinction to any assembly. It met in the great studio of William Chase on West Tenth Street. Chase was a real Bohemian with his soft tie, his narrow French silk hat, looking (as he, of course, wanted to look) as if he had just escaped from the Latin Quarter. He had no money to speak of, but he was long as to children — I believe there were eight — and as to studios. Room after room, as I remember them, full of all kinds of curios that he had picked up all over the world. We used to go there once a month in the winter to hear great artists play amid congenial surroundings and among friends. Among others I there heard Ysaye, Plançon, and Paderewski.

One evening Carmencita danced there, but it was not for the Music Club, and I did not see it and had to be content with what my husband told me of it. Sargent was painting her portrait. They said he sat and watched her as if almost

in a trance, hypnotized by the motion, grace, abandon, which he put into every inch of one of his greatest of portraits.

During those first years the Music Club met in the studio, but later, after Chase had given up his rooms, its meetings were held in the houses of members whose rooms were large enough for entertaining; the Barneys, the Tiffanys, the Vanderbilts, the Morgans, and later, at Sherry's, where it died a natural death.

There was another salon of an older date which must have been, perhaps, the most interesting, but I went there only twice, and then in its later days. This was the house of Mrs. Botta on West Thirty-Seventh Street. This drawing-room is said by the biographers to have been probably the 'nearest approach to a French salon' on this side of the water, and I imagine that this was true, even more so than in the case of Mrs. Gilder, because it was apparently a purely spontaneous coming-together of great minds, poetic and literary, who assembled in the house of this very clever woman to talk because they loved to talk. It must have been a wonderful gathering, the shining centre of which was Poe, and there were numerous others, such as N. P. Willis, Horace Greeley, Miss Sedgwick, Grace Greenwood, Bayard Taylor, Cassius M. Clay, W. H. Furness, and Margaret Fuller. Of course Mrs. Botta was herself a poetess, as was Mrs. Whitman, Poe's unfortunate love; in fact, all the poets and poetesses of the time seemed to congregate there. Mrs. Whitman was her intimate friend, and naturally the great tragedy of Poe's life was very near to the hostess.

At one gathering, a Valentine party, they all wrote poems, some of which were later published. Poe died in

1849, and so these days were much earlier than anything of which I knew personally. My Mr. French went there with his cousin, Mr. F. O. French, once or twice, I only in the later years of Mrs. Botta's life, and not often enough to get very much of the atmosphere of the place.

It was a large drawing-room on the second floor, full of rather stuffy old furniture, and Mrs. Botta was growing to be an elderly woman. In fact, it was only a year or two befor her death. The rooms were full of literary and artistic people, and I was thrilled at being there even so briefly and at so late a date, on what had been sacred ground to the literature and poetry of America.

The Millet house was in West Eighth Street. Frank Millet had been an early friend of my husband's. His wife was a beautiful woman, and upon the wall of their living-room hung a very beautiful portrait of her by Sargent. I remember she told me that the artist had painted at least six portraits, one over the other, before he had been satisfied to let it go.

Millet himself was one of the most attractive and lovable men I ever knew — buoyant, full of fun and enthusiasm, but above all, full of humanity. I remember once a dinner at Mrs. Poor's in the great house which Mr. Poor and Stanford White had built upon Gramercy Park. I said something about feeling sorry for the people in street cars, I think it was, and Millet reached over and put his hand on mine, and, oblivious of the gorgeous table and the women and the jewels, he said, 'That's the way I feel, Mrs. French. I look around at their poor, overworked, starved faces, and I feel so sorry for them — so sorry.' And you knew what he meant. When he looked at them, you knew

he was not conscious of their grimy clothes, of their poverty, but only that he wanted to help.

The last time I saw him, the winter of 1911, he had just come back from abroad and he and Mr. French were to go West that night on the twelve o'clock train. He telephoned that he would come to our house first. We had been having a little dinner and were all seated in front of the fire in the studio at the back of the house. I remember how he suddenly appeared upon the balcony above, his arms full of branches, laughing and calling to us, and then he came slowly down the curving flight of steps holding his offerings aloft. There were branches of green with little tangerines in groups, and short sprays with oranges, and he came over and seated himself in our midst in front of the fire. He had brought them for us, he said, from the gardens of the Academy of Rome. He afterwards confessed, amidst our laughter, that they had not grown in exactly that way, and that Lily had spent the early part of the evening tying them into place, and showed us with glee how skilfully it had been done, with white linen thread and narrow green ribbons.

That was the last I ever saw of him. He had come like a youth, bearing us offerings from other lands, joyous, childishly enthusiastic. I shall never forget the picture he made coming down the steps, with the bright-colored branches held aloft, and after his death one of our guests wrote telling us how this vivid memory stayed with him.

In 1912, when it was time for him again to come home — he and my husband were then working upon the State Capitol at Madison, Wisconsin — he wrote to Mr. French that he might be a little late, that the Titanic was to sail at the most convenient date, but he had always made it a rule

never to sail on a ship's maiden trip, though he would do so, of course, if it were necessary. It was apparently necessary, and he came, and when the news reached us of the sinking of the ship, Mr. French's first thought was that Millet was among the saved; that he had been through so much in his life and was so full of ingenuity that if any one human being on the ship would be saved, it would be Frank Millet.

And then day after day we did not hear. There were a number of people whom we had known, Major Archie Butt, Colonel Gracie, Mrs. Astor, Mrs. Appleton, and first and always, Millet. We kept looking for news — my husband was so sure that he would turn up — and then a long time afterward we heard the reason — a reason we ought to have thought of when we realized the suffering and tragedies that were taking place. A woman being carried down the side of the ship had seen him standing in the steerage, among the poor frightened peasants, trying to cheer them, to reassure them, to help them, because he could speak their language and make them understand.

We might have known it! Dear Frank Millet! I could feel his hand — after many years — pressing down upon mine, oblivious of the laughter, the jewels, the flowers, and could hear his voice, usually merry and gay, 'I feel so sorry for them — so — so — sorry!'

And then all the others, all the interesting and notable people whom we met, although at that time and always I was shut off by ill-health from much that I should have otherwise enjoyed. There was Dewing, who looked like a big handsome Englishman, and who painted gossamer ladies in gowns and shadows of mother-of-pearl; Gilder

whose black hair grew long and straight and whom somebody described as 'the man who had been rained on'; Will Low, and the dear Blashfields who knew everything out of books and about art, and had a way of making you think that you knew it yourself. 'If you want to know a thing,' was the saying, 'ask Mr. Blashfield, and if he doesn't know it, ask Mrs. Blashfield.' And Herbert Adams, and 'Old Potter,' and Hamlin Garland, and Bobby Reid.

Some one said to me one day, rather taking my breath away, 'Do you really *like* Mr. Potter? You always speak of him as "Old Potter" and laugh at him.' As if any one could know Edward Potter and not love him, big and dark and solemn, big-hearted and full of fun! We called him 'Old Potter' because he was so serious and because of a curious way he had of putting his foot into it; not from any real obtuseness, but rather from a certain simplicity of mind, no suggestion in the back of his brain, as in most of our brains, to mitigate the absorption of whatever happened to be in his mind at that particular moment. He wandered one day into Saint-Gaudens's studio, and stood staring at the artist's big Shaw Memorial, and after a while wandered out again with practically no remark, and no apparent appreciation of his fellow artist's great work. He undoubtedly assumed that Saint-Gaudens would not be interested in his opinions.

Saint-Gaudens, with his Celtic love for politeness, never quite forgave him until once, many years afterwards in Cornish, Mr. French rather set Potter on to tell one of his funny stories. It was, as he told it, very, very funny, and Saint-Gaudens sat down by the roadside and shook with laughter. They were friends from that moment as Mr. French knew they would be.

'That sepulchre on wheels,' Saint-Gaudens would say afterwards, bursting into laughter at the thought — 'That sepulchre on wheels, letting out a story like that! Why, it is enough to make the Angel Gabriel laugh!'

Potter was very devoted to animals — horses, dogs, and all animals — and made them in clay with the same pleasure as he did his more serious work. There was one little dog with his head cocked sideways, one ear up and the other limp, who looked as if he were laughing. Mr. French said one day, 'How did you know enough to make him like that? How did you know how he felt?' And Potter meditated, 'Well, when I make a dog, I just feel like a dog.' I know Mrs. Burnett said that about her 'Robin,' but I also knew Potter said it years before.

His wife and I — she had been a friend of mine before they were married, in fact, he had met her at my house — used to treasure up the things he said because they were so like him and so unlike anybody else. I remember so well one day when he came into the room where she was ill in bed with some passing ailment. It was in Chicago, and our husbands were both working there at the World's Fair.

He sat down by the bed where she was propped up among the pillows. She was pretty and fragile-looking, and made rather a pathetic picture. He was very gentle and sympathetic in his rather serious way, and half unconsciously I had an impression of his being big, and kind, and tender. After a moment he went back to the affairs of the day, to the work at the World's Fair Grounds, the great statue of the 'Republic' which my husband was building in the Agricultural Building.

'The fellows all say,' said Potter in his deep voice, turn-

ing to me, 'that the head of the "Republic" is going to look like you.'

I smiled and felt properly complimented, and Potter went on immediately. 'That's the way it always is' — as if he were propounding a philosophy of life — 'men always make a statue to look like some woman. I suppose they don't know they are doing it, but if Adams makes a woman's head, it looks like Mrs. Adams, and if French makes a woman's head, it looks like you.' He thought deeply for a moment. 'I suppose if I were to make a woman' — May from the lace of her pillows glanced sideways and smiled a happy smile — 'If I were to make a woman' — Potter's deep voice rambled on — 'I suppose — it would look like a — horse!' Horses were his specialty.

And the fun of it was that he always saw the joke of it afterwards as much as any one, though he thought we girls exaggerated things and made a lot out of nothing.

Bobby Reid was big and dark and striking and has grown handsomer in the glimpses that I have caught of him through the years.

And Bitter, who was a sculptor by accident, so he said — but that is another story.

And Chase, who was more French than the Latin Quarter itself, but he got away with it, and was altogether charming.

Paderewski I never had the pleasure of knowing, but I met him and was introduced to him in many drawing-rooms, one of the fifty-seven varieties of admirers. There was one little story which I love to recall, as I think it has never been in print.

He was a great friend of the Gilders and an intimate of their household. Francesca, the second daughter, was

about the age of my own child, a cunning old-fashioned little girl, gypsy-like and pretty, also, as I remember her, especially polite. It was said in the family that Francesca was always trying to put people at their ease. At that time she and her sister were taking dancing lessons each week, learning new steps and showing them to the family; Miss Hall, their music teacher, playing for them on such occasions.

One day, when Mr. Paderewski was there, he said, 'Well, little girls, how is the dancing coming on?'

It was coming on well and the little girls loved it.

'Any new steps — and couldn't you show them to me?'

Oh, yes, they could show him, but the trouble was Miss Hall wasn't there to play for them. They couldn't dance without Miss Hall.

'Well, perhaps I could play for you. How would that do?'

You can imagine the unconscious condescension in the tone of their visitor.

So the children picked up their skirts and went through their steps, and the great musician played for them, and when they were through, everybody applauded and they sat down again breathless but happy. From his perch upon the stool, Paderewski leaned forward and said:

'And how did I play, Francesca? I hope I played well enough.'

Francesca hesitated, her little face slightly troubled. 'Oh, yes, Mr. Paderewski.' She waited a moment, and then apologetically, 'You did awfully well. Of course it — wasn't — like — Miss Hall ——'

True! It was not like Miss Hall — one — two — *bang!*

— one — two — *bang!* and fortunately the great musician knew it, and thereby saved his pride.

There was a story about the great Duse, which Mr. Gilder delighted to tell. She sometimes dropped in most informally at their house in Clinton Place, for a little glimpse of the home life which she loved.

Some of the family were planning a walk, and it being Sunday afternoon and the nurse's day out, Mrs. Gilder regretted that she could not go with the others; she must stay at home and take care of little Francesca, the youngest child, at that time about a year old.

'Oh, no, not at all.' Madame Duse insisted that there was no need for her hostess to give up her exercise. She herself was going to stay at home and rest, that was what she had come for, and if that little angel in the carriage needed anything ——

'What would you do if she cried?' asked some one.

'Do? Why, what would anybody do for a crying baby? Why, I'd sing to her,' said the resourceful Duse. 'I'd shake things at her. Why, I love babies, and I'm terribly clever, Helena: I have lots of tricks which you've never even heard of — to entertain babies.'

She was so insistent, so enthusiastic, that the family finally went off and left them, the exquisite Duse standing in the doorway, and waving a good-bye, and the little black-eyed witch of a baby patting her hands and crowing with delight at all the excitement going on about her.

They took their walk, returned after perhaps an hour, paused for a moment in the front hall and listened — for any hint of trouble. All was quiet, the experiment had been successful, and they entered. In the middle of the floor, in

her carriage, sat the bewitching baby, her hands resting placidly upon the coverlet in front of her, her head slightly drooping, her lips parted, her eyes fixed with a hypnotic stare upon the head of the sofa near her.

Stretched out upon the sofa, flat upon her back, lay the great actress. Her head, also, was drooping slightly to one side upon the pillow, her mouth was open, her eyes were shut. She was snoring, regularly, sonorously snoring.

Slowly she opened her eyes. 'Sh!' she said. 'If I stop for a second, she'll cry.'

After a moment, she came to herself and laughed. 'It was the only thing that she'd pay the slightest attention to,' she explained. 'I sang for her; I danced for her; I made faces at her; I acted the whole of "Paolo and Francesca" to her, and she hated it all. But the snoring — from the first faint sign — she loved it!'

She stood a moment and looked down at the little witch of a baby, gazing curiously up at her. 'I've added a new trick to my repertoire,' she said.

It was one of the early winters of my life in New York when a little incident happened which we of the family would have called 'Dan's luck.'

The Gallaudet statue — whose legs, by the way, had pretty nearly wrecked our marriage — was finished, and was to be set up at the Deaf Mute College, Kendall Green, near Washington. Mr. French had wandered about the grounds with Dr. Gallaudet, son of the founder, and had picked the place which of all others he wanted. It was in front of the chapel and was occupied at the moment by a big apple tree, rather a handsome tree.

A little later, Dr. Gallaudet wrote, saying that, alas!

such a row had been raised in his family about the demolishing of the tree; that his daughters claimed that they would much rather have the tree than the statue, although they were greatly pleased with the latter; that the tree had always been there and would last as long as they would. The statue could stand anywhere, and they would not hear of having the tree cut down.

This was discouraging; the setting of a statue being naturally an important event in our lives, but there seemed to be nothing to do. In a few weeks Dr. Gallaudet wrote:

A curious thing has happened. There was a terrible storm a few nights ago, and almost half of your precious tree was blown down. I have waited in hopes that my daughters would come to their senses and would agree that the remains of the tree should be demolished, but, alas! they still cling to the old broken stump. They will not hear of it. The trouble is I cannot make them understand the importance of the right place for a statue.

Of course we in the family were righteously indignant that our statue should be set aside for a *piece* of a tree, but Mr. French, with his usual optimism, said, 'Well, let's wait awhile. Perhaps something will happen.' And after a few more weeks another letter came from Dr. Gallaudet.

What will you say when I tell you that a miracle has happened? Behold! Another storm has come and gone, and the other branch has been torn away, and even my unreasonable offspring do not insist that the bare stump should be left standing. The statue can stand where you and I want it, and where it should stand.

Which some people would have called good luck, but which Mr. French always claimed was making the most of the good things that happened to you, instead of the bad!

In the year 1889, our one child was born in Concord, Massachusetts, an appropriate place for Dan French's

ASIA
Group on the New York Custom House

child first to see the light. Growing up, however, in New York, as she did, and considering herself a New-Yorker, she was always slightly resentful of the fact that she was not born in this great, noisy, terrible city. When she was a few hours old, her father facetiously wrote to my mother, in Washington, that his little second cousin Margaret (named for her) had arrived.

CHAPTER XI

THE WORLD'S FAIR: SAINT-GAUDENS AND OTHERS

In the fall of 1892 we went to Paris for the winter. It was my first trip abroad and in many ways interesting, but it could hardly be called a successful trip, for two reasons. In the first place, the season — unusual, of course — was cold and grey and muddy, and everything disagreeable as to weather, which gave me a chill in my bones, from the memories of which, at least, I have never quite recovered. Also it was the year of the World's Fair in Chicago, and Mr. French, who was to make the great statue of the 'Republic' for the Court of Honor, was, owing to some unexpected change of plan, suddenly called back to the United States. He came home, a bitter winter passage, about the first of the year, and I, having my aunt, my child, and my maid with me, stayed in Paris until May.

Of course there were some interesting memories; among others of Bouguereau's studio, where we used to go often, and where was also Miss Jennie Gardner, of Exeter, New Hampshire, whom he either married or didn't marry — I have forgotten the details. There was a certain glamour about that young woman of Puritan birth, a contemporary of my Puritan aunts, living there in the Latin Quarter, and doing something that all Paris talked about.

There was the marriage of Miss Mattie Mitchell to the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, the Ambassador, giving her away at the church. We filed round into the vestry to greet the pretty little bride and the big imposing groom, and after the ceremony a very gorgeous

official of some kind stood up in front of the altar, waved his hands up and down, and chanted monotonously, 'Gardez votre poches, monsieur et madame!' as if the aristocracy of France were all pickpockets.

I met Oscar Wilde several times, who in later years had grown fat, and sat next to a royal Prince of Denmark at dinner.

Mr. French had exhibited his group of the 'Angel of Death' in the Salon, and had been given a medal — the first American sculptor, I understand, to be so honored — and had taken a dear little studio in an *impasse* with Frémiet, next door, and Rolshoven and one or two other Americans near at hand.

Mr. William Couper, the sculptor, who had lived abroad, chiefly in Florence most of his life, told about meeting a friend, one of the Salon jury, on the street in Paris, who referred to Mr. French's work in a most complimentary way.

'Why didn't you give him a *first* medal,' asked Couper, 'if you all liked it so much?'

His friend watched him a moment as if he were considering the question. 'Well,' he said, 'why didn't you have somebody there to holler for him? It came up, you know, and we were all interested immediately, and talked about it and admired it, but we had never heard of the man or of his work, whether he even made it himself, and so, you see — well, you just ought to have had somebody there to holler for him.' Which, of course, we took as a very great compliment. It was a new light upon the bestowing of honors — to two unsophisticated people from Washington and Boston.

When my child and I came back to America in the

spring and went to Chicago, we found Mr. French with a tremendous group of other artists working upon the buildings of the World's Fair. It was an interesting time, with so much going on, on a very big scale, every one doing something, Millet, MacMonnies, Kenyon Cox, Blashfield, and others. Augustus Lukeman, sculptor to-day of the 'Stone Mountain Memorial,' had charge of Mr. French's particular gang.

Mr. French was building the great statue of the 'Republic,' sixty-five feet high, which was to stand in the Lagoon. It was a good deal, it seemed to me, like building the Tower of Babel. They made a big square platform a few feet from the ground, and upon this, near the edge, a kind of stockade or fence ten feet high in broad convolutions, covered it with a mixture of jute and plaster which gradually developed into the great ripples of a not very conventional woman's skirt.

They built another section and still another, until there were these mushroom growths all about the floor of the Forestry Building where the work was being done.

Of course it was a good deal of a job for a mere artist to plan this great structure, but I have always said that, if Mr. French had not been a sculptor, he would have been an inventor; and the work went steadily on until finally the first section and then the other sections, one at a time, were carried out, planted in the Lagoon, and the head and shoulders of the statue settled into place.

He and Potter were also making some figures for the Quadriga, which was to stand upon the Great Arch where the Lagoon opened out into the lake, and four groups of bulls and horses and humans, to stand at the entrance of the Agricultural Building.

One corner of the interior of the building was fenced off for this particular work into a rough studio, and there Mr. French and Mr. Potter made their horses with the attendant figures of girls and pages, and here the models came and posed for them, some in Greek draperies and sometimes, I imagine, without draperies, and Mr. French discovered that the workmen outside were making holes in the plaster walls of the studio — pinholes on the inside, but large enough on the outside to accommodate a human eye, and allow the curious to gaze upon the mysteries of studio life!

I used to go down and watch the work going on and shiver to see my only husband climbing around at such a height. The men were always tumbling off things, the work was rushed, and the workmen were perfectly reckless. Ambulances were dashing around the town at all hours of the day and night, and we wives, sitting at home, used to wonder at each noise clanging by the house which particular husband was being brought home, and what particular accident had happened to *him!*

Colonel Edward Rice, afterwards Military Governor of the Philippines, who had been appointed Head of Police, and so on, was an old friend of ours, and they had a pleasant house in the neighborhood. He was considered a great disciplinarian, a big fine-looking man with a pleasant manner and a kindly smile. His wife was a little woman, full of the joy of living, and she always reminded me of a pretty little mosquito buzzing around a great Newfoundland dog.

I remember one afternoon when I stopped at her house for a moment, and remarked casually that I was going up to the Midway. 'Not alone!' she exclaimed. 'Oh, the

Colonel would never let you do that!' — and before I knew what had happened, a great red police patrol had stopped in front of the house, and also before I knew it, Mrs. Rice and I were seated in each other's laps in the front seat beside the Colonel, and were darting off to the Midway and down the main boulevard, the gong banging for all the world like a fire engine. Later we left the wagon and went about on foot among the shows.

All the keepers of all the booths ran out and almost prostrated themselves before Colonel Rice. It was a great thing to travel with the head of the whole show — the foreigners were obsequious, the Americans tried to corral us. Wouldn't the Colonel and his ladies take just a little walk, or a little climb, or a little swing? There seemed to be every variety of amusement, some of them quite terrifying: Ferris wheels, roller coasters, moving sidewalks, the Colonel grasping my arm, I being the guest, and little Mrs. Rice buzzing along behind, tripping over her skirts, sputtering, remonstrating. 'We're not going down there, Colonel. I always told you I'd never go into that p-l-a-c-e — Mrs. French is scared — she is — she *is* — she says she doesn't want — to — to ——' But by that time, in true military fashion, we had been ushered into some gate or through some stockade or over some stile, and the door banged behind us.

We went up into the air in swinging cages and wobbled downhill over moving runways, but the most terrible thing of all was the snow sidewalk — Mrs. Rice behind us, gasping and sputtering, 'Mrs. French is scared, Colonel, she *is* scared. Just look at her.' And on we went, dashing down a long wooden tunnel, lickety-split into the board fence ahead, only, just as we reached the fence, we slewed side-

ways, dashed down another tunnel, then up a hill, and into another fence, almost, and this we had to do twice.

In front, on the seat beside me, was a man — I don't know what he looked like or anything about him, except that he said suddenly, 'Hold on to me.' I held on — we both held on to each other — and thus we went dashing through space, our hands gripping, our teeth chattering, around! and around! and around! and when we stopped, I never thanked him or looked at him. I had no idea what he was like; I never saw him again; in fact, I never saw him at all. I only knew that he was something firm and hard to hold on to, and, vaguely, that he had kept me from flying into space. At any rate, we saw the Midway before other people saw it, and the artists at the hotel were envious of us when we told them about it. They wouldn't have been had we told them the truth!

When we first went out in the spring, we boarded, but later took a house. Mrs. Potter had a nurse for her children, and I had one for my child, so we pooled our issues, and set up a very simple kind of housekeeping, which, for a time, made us happy. It was rather nice to have a certain privacy and our own well-cooked food, also to have the young painters and sculptors coming in to meals. But alas! It was not long before a terrible tragedy descended upon us. We were overrun, infested, driven out of our homes by bedbugs! I know that the 'B.B.' is not a subject permissible in polite conversation, but any subject of overwhelming importance, a question of life or of death, becomes permissible. Also, I had lived in Washington, where, on account of the darkies and the warm climate, they were of necessity a subject of discussion.

There in that suburb of Chicago, owing, it was said, to

the wholesale importation of new lumber, they came like one of the plagues of Egypt. The furniture in the house was infested by them, and we saw them coming out in processions from behind the window-frames and mop-boards. There was nowhere to go, our husbands were obliged to stay there and work, and Mrs. Potter and I devoted our hours, both sleeping and waking, to the pursuit of the pests. My little girl would sit up in bed, her hair still moist upon her forehead, her cheeks still marked from sleep, and point a stubby finger at the wall.

'There's one, there's one!' she would cry ecstatically.

'One what?'

'A fi,' she would exclaim, innocently thinking that we spent our lives chasing a perfectly harmless fly which had worried its way through the screens.

Mr. French, having lived in New England all his life, had never seen one.

'Is that a B.B.?' he cried, evidently disappointed. 'That little flat thing — I knew they were red, but I had an idea that they were big — like grasshoppers.'

As soon as the hotel over on the other side of the town was finished, we gave up our house, and joined the artists there.

When the time came for moving, we put our trunks out upon the lawn, carried out everything that we owned, spread the things on the grass, brushed and beat and shook them, and shook ourselves and each other, and then, without another peep into the house, with our babies and nurses and bundles, we went in a procession across the fields to the hotel; and our friends, knowing only a small part of the truth, welcomed us. For some reason that particular corner where dwelt the new hotel was never molested.

All the artists were there, most of them with their wives. It was quite an exciting life for any one who cared about art — the men working all day at their jobs, painting, sculping, decorating, all working against time — World's Fairs are always rushed through — working all day, talking art in the evening, filled with enthusiasm; as Richard Le Gallienne said, 'One can never be truly unhappy if one has discovered what art is early in life.'

We went back the next summer to look at it, the Grand Court opening out through columns into the lake, the white buildings forming a quadrangle about the lagoon, with the 'Republic' at one end and MacMonnies's 'Fountain' at the other. It was very beautiful, but I am afraid it seemed to us rather cold. The men loved to build it, but they spent most of their time in the Midway, and the mass of the people had not yet discovered, as had the foreigners, how to sit around in an enchanted spot, to sip a glass of wine, and enjoy one's soul and the beauty of the scene.

Two of those summers, the one before the World's Fair, and the one after, we spent in Cornish, New Hampshire, which we loved, but which was too far from New York for us to adopt as our home.

Cornish was, in my day, and of course still is, a community rather than a village, a scattering group of houses among the New Hampshire hills. There was not even what we might call a settlement; occasionally two or three houses near together, but most of them like small country estates, wide apart. For the mail and for whatever small business affairs there were, we drove down long hills, and along flat river-banks, and through an old ramshackle covered bridge, into the town of Windsor.

There is a bird's-eye view made for the Saint-Gaudens Memorial Publication which gives a better idea, roughly, of the plan than any description can do.

The places were lovely and unusual — unusual, I think, for two reasons. They were built at very small expense, and they were the natural outgrowth of the spot in which they were built. There was none of the old-fashioned method of clearing off a tract of land, cutting down trees, filling up ravines, laying out roads between the house and the view. In other words, the taking out of everything that naturally grew there and putting in everything that was foreign. As a woman once said to me, 'I hear that your husband has decorated your garden with apple trees. Such an interesting idea!' I did not explain to her that the garden was put there partly because the apple trees were there, and that the sudden dropping off of the land and the little paths into the woods, with a turn here, and a banking up there — those spots had been waiting to be turned into a garden for a hundred years, and just that particular kind of garden, and no other!

I think of the Herbert Adams place, how exquisite it was, and yet — those little touches which no one but an artist would have thought of perpetrating — a house and a barn about sixty feet apart, the narrow ends close to the road — a commonplace sight enough almost anywhere in New England — but with a high fence connecting the two and painted white, a parallelogram of green inside, a hedge and a blind wall opposite the fence, a few columns, a stone floor against the house, and an amphora or a colored relief against the white walls of the barn or of the fence — one might have been in Italy or anywhere, and yet no effort, no expense, no display.

And of course Maxfield Parrish's place — a little rambling farmhouse on a hillside, as I remember it. We wandered up along a winding pathway, and there, in front of the house a few yards away and slightly lower, was the oval pool which he has made famous with blue waters and peaked Alps, recumbent maidens and youths.

Charles Platt's home was a forerunner of the wonderful places which he has since developed, a kind of American Italy. The Tom Dewing house, low upon the road, with its little garden ablaze, as I remember it, with every shade of yellow, and upon the hill opposite, the Italian villa which Mrs. Johnston, then Miss Annie Lazarus, who now lives in a garden in Venice, had built and made beautiful.

It was a bare hill with a long winding road that took forever to climb with one horse, and some one commented:

'Perfectly lovely when you get there, but why on earth did she build on such a terrible hill?'

'Oh,' remarked somebody else, 'so that Dewing could sit in his garden when he smoked and gaze up at one of the hill towns of Italy!'

Some of the artists used to say that Saint-Gaudens had the only real house in Cornish. It was a brick of the severe Colonial type, and had in the earlier days been a tavern. When I first saw it, it stood upon a bank, slightly back from the road, and you went up a short flight of marble steps cut into the bank, and along a short marble walk to the simple Colonial front door.

To be sure, Saint-Gaudens had done everything to it that he could think of to make it as little like New England as possible. He had put an elaborate fence around the top of the bank with Greek heads at regular intervals, and a

big and elaborate porch at the front to get that 'infernal Puritan look' out of it, which offended his Celtic soul.

This porch, where they ate their meals much of the time, looked towards Ascutney, as do most of the houses in Cornish, just as in Sicily they look toward Ætna, and in Japan towards Fuji-yama. It is a cult. When you go to visit their terraces, to eat upon their porches, you find yourself facing the sacred mountain.

When I went to visit the Winston Churchills, out upon the terrace in front of their beautiful 'old English' house, there sat their small son, hardly more than a baby, patting a diminutive pile of sand with a silver spoon, culled from the dining-room.

'What are you doing?' I asked.

He was a seraph, but he wasted no time in discussion. He went on with his tiny mound in front of him. 'Tutney, Tutney!' he admitted casually, without even glancing at me.

It was a great privilege to live, as I lived, for part of two summers almost next door to Mr. Saint-Gaudens, to know a great man, as a great man ought to be known, in surroundings of more or less his own choosing. His own house, his work, his friends, not among the chatter, even the interesting chatter, of the crowd.

When I hear people glibly remark, 'Oh, I think celebrities are always stupid to talk to,' I often want to say, 'Do you think *you* interest *them?* Do you think he was interested in you?'

Of course I never said any such thing, but there is a good deal in it. No one is interesting or interested in every subject. The bigger the man, the less he likes to be shown off. Saint-Gaudens was very fond of people. He had a great

fund of humor. He was most appreciative of other people's jokes, but he cared little for formal society. He was apt to be thinking of something else.

I always see him, when the rooms filled up, as running away. I remember one evening thinking how nice it was to find him sitting with other friends at a musicale — this in New York, but a little later, as one or two men filed by us to the door, Saint-Gaudens rose, apologetically excused himself, 'For a moment,' and never returned. He spent the rest of the evening in the smoking-room with the men.

And another occasion I remember even more forcibly, and always with a smile. It was in Cornish, and Mrs. Saint-Gaudens being for some reason detained at home, we, the Herbert Adamses, the Frenches, and Saint-Gaudenses, went off in his trap over the hills to an evening party, neighbors and friends, the kind of party he thought he liked.

As he went into the room, he whispered in my ear, 'Not too late,' which I, of course, promptly forgot. Later, much later, in the evening — I remember we had been listening to music and watching the tableaux — when, as some one else had made a move, I decided that the show being mostly over some of our party might like to go. I turned to Saint-Gaudens, who was in a way, having driven us over, our host.

'Would you care to leave now?' I faintly suggested, and turned back toward the music. After another moment I rose, murmured some other faint suggestion, then, half turning back to my seat, I said, 'Perhaps Mr. Saint-Gaudens would like to stay longer.'

He rose up from his seat quietly but suddenly, 'For God's sake, no,' he said, and started for the door. We fol-

lowed him out and packed ourselves into the trap and as we drove off over the hills, Herbert Adams driving, Saint-Gaudens came back to himself and had a good time.

I think of him there at his own home as a most interesting personage. He loved a story and he was a great mimic. Once when some one complained about the speed — or lack of speed — of a neighboring horse, he said, 'It is just what I like. You can think about something else as you drive along.' I, on the contrary, said I liked a horse that could go, and perhaps in my enthusiasm enlarged upon the subject. I remember how, almost before I had finished my sentence, Saint-Gaudens had shown me up to the assembly.

He crossed his knees and hunched them up in front of him, his hands gathered up imaginary reins beneath his chin, he slapped a small worsted mat from a near-by work-bag upon one side of his head, hooked a cigar into the corner of his mouth, and in a moment had me tearing down the road like a disreputable jockey. 'This is the way Mrs. French likes to ride when *she* drives' — I sitting very still and realizing that it did look exactly like the picture which I, in my enthusiasm, had conveyed.

My little girl of three years had a curious faculty of pronouncing each syllable of a word, so distinctly as to give an impression of a great vocabulary. She really did not know very many words, but she made the most of them, and people used to say, 'That child speaks as if she were grown up.' This greatly amused Mr. Saint-Gaudens and he made up sentences or words just to hear her repeat them. The moment he saw her coming down the road he would begin.

'Here comes Little Louisiana Purch-ase,' or sometimes he would stand her in front of his knees and say, 'Little

Mississippi River,' and before the words were out of his mouth, the child would gasp, 'Li-tt-le Miss-iss-ip-pi Ri-*ver*.' She had a curious inflection which put the accent on the last syllable.

'Great Lar-go Resti-guchy,' he would say with gusto, and the child would rush at it.

'Great Lar-go Resti-gou-*che*,' she would gasp breathlessly, Saint-Gaudens laughing with delight; and the child would come over and stand solemnly in front of me and say, 'Mr. Saint-Gau-*dens* is a nice man, Mamma, isn't he?' She, too, liked his sympathetic appreciation of her efforts.

He was very fond of having young men about him, and of going about town with them, some people said, 'whooping it up,' and wondering sometimes that Saint-Gaudens, with his superior tastes and great personality, should care for some of the things they did. I always felt about Saint-Gaudens that there was something of a tendency toward, if not morbidness, at least towards introspection, from which he wished to escape; that he craved excitement, or at least diversion. Louis Saint-Gaudens used to say of him, 'My brother Gus is a very good man. He tries pretty hard to be vicious, but he is really a very good man.'

Those years in New York were also full of interesting people and of interesting events in the life of my artist husband. There were all kinds of people to meet, some of whom we saw a great deal, others only passing glimpses, Abbott Thayer, Bitter, Zangwill, Janvier. Evelyn Longman came into our lives about that time by way of Chicago, where she had been studying at the Art Institute, under Mr. W. M. R. French, my brother-in-law, who had sent her to us. She was young, and I remember

the first day she came to our house. She wore a grey hat with a curling feather down over her ear which, with the dark eyes beneath, took Mr. French's eye, quite as much as the reputation she had already acquired as to talent. He had never had any young woman working in his studio and always insisted that he would never have one. He said that he should have to spend too much time being polite to her, but he did take Miss Longman, who assisted him, and later advised him, and became our dear friend for life.

She used to seize upon me sometimes and say, 'Are you sure that I am a real help to him, that he didn't take me just out of kindness? I wouldn't stay for one minute if that were true.' So I reassured her that he couldn't live without her — artistically. This was what she wanted; although I have always suspected that it was two thirds — her eyes!

One of those winters, Mr. French was making the John Boyle O'Reilly for the Back Bay in Boston. It was a large group, and he had already devoted himself to it for a couple of years, but he called me into the studio one day and said with a few anxious wrinkles in his forehead:

'Mary, I left this group here last spring on purpose so that I shouldn't see it for six months and could come back to it with a fresh eye, and now what should you think' — he gazed at me with a still more troubled expression — 'if I told you that I was going to pull it to pieces and make it over, more like the original sketch? We may not have much to eat for a while' — which was, of course, only a figure of speech — 'but I know I can better it, and I really don't see what else I can do.'

So we studied it carefully — I had always liked the sketch better myself — and that winter was devoted to getting into it something that he felt he had missed in his previous year's work. Of course, all artists do that kind of thing, and having an artist both for a husband and cousin, I was quite used to the idea.

When Mr. French made the bronze doors for the Public Library in Boston, it was just nine years from the time he began them until they were finished, and McKim, slightly discouraged, used to write to him and say, 'How long, at the rate you have taken for the doors, would it take to make two statues for Alabama or' — or any one of his numerous projects?

About this time, Mr. French had the opportunity and pleasure of doing — I have forgotten just how much — something towards the completion of the headstone which the Alcott family were having made for their famous Aunt Louisa. After it was finished, her nephew, Mr. Pratt, one of Meg's sons, in writing Mr. French, wished they could show their appreciation of what he had done, and for which, of course, he had not been willing to take any remuneration.

Mr. French, after thinking it over, wrote back to him and said: 'There is something I would like you to do. My child is eight years old, and it would be a great pleasure if she could have some memento of Miss Louisa and her work. Perhaps you would send her one of the books — for instance, "An Old-Fashioned Girl." ' Later, to our great surprise, and almost — but not quite — to our embarrassment came a box with twenty-seven volumes of Miss Alcott's works, beautifully bound in blue and gold, with an autographed poem in the first volume. Of course we were

all delighted, and Margaret almost overwhelmed at the importance of such a present, also possibly slightly embarrassed at the implied literary obligation.

Still she wrote Mr. Pratt a note, and, as she was rather fond of writing notes herself, I thought it well to let her write it her own way and send it to him. A few months afterwards, Mr. Pratt called at our house in New York, and after we had had a talk and had expressed our appreciation of this unexpected gift, he said, 'I want to see Margaret; tell her I came expressly to see her.'

So she came downstairs and stood in front of him.

'Margaret,' he said, 'I'm so glad you liked the set of books we sent you, and you wrote me such a nice letter, but I came to see you especially to know what the other two presents were that you felt you must conscientiously write me about. You said that you like this present better than any other you had at Christmas, "except two others," and so I felt I must come and see you and find out what the other two presents were.'

For a moment Margaret thought over his words, and then turned to me and said, 'Well, you see, Mamma' — just a trifle perplexed — 'you see, there was my doll! and there was my washing set! and ——'

'That explains it,' said Mr. Pratt, perfectly seriously. 'I can see how, with three such treasures as a set of books and a doll and a washing set, it was hard to have a preference.'

One of the greatest interests of Mr. French's artistic life was his help in the founding and carrying on of the American Academy in Rome. This, outside of Charles McKim's profession, was the great passion of his life, and I am sure that he carried along by his enthusiasm the other men as-

sociated with him, as he did Mr. French. McKim was absolutely merciless in his enthusiasm, and his co-workers were quite carried away by him, and for the time being were quite willing to sacrifice themselves.

I remember Fred Crowninshield used to say, 'I am so mad with McKim! Of course I love McKim — everybody loves McKim — but I get so mad with him, the way he ropes me into things and makes me enthusiastic in spite of myself.'

A funny little incident happened when Mr. French and Mr. Olmsted went down to Panama. President Roosevelt sent them as members of the Art Commission, to see what they could do about the town of Balboa, which was being laid out a few yards from Panama itself. Mr. French took our daughter and our niece, Miss Schoonmaker, and, with Mr. and Mrs. Olmsted, they had a beautiful trip and a good time, flying around with General Gorgas and Colonel Gaillard in the blazing sun, and seeing this new and interesting experiment going on in the tropics. The town of Balboa was being just started, and Mr. Olmsted thought of some things which probably were a help, for when we went there a few years ago, it was growing into a most attractive town with a definite plan and showing the signs of an experienced hand.

On the way back on the ship — Olmsted having made a good many sketches — he and Mr. French made plans and got things into shape. One day, having these plans spread out upon the floor and the beds of the stateroom, they heard a sudden cry of 'Ship ahoy!' They looked out the porthole, and, not being able to see the ship, ran out on deck, as people always do in mid-ocean, at a suggestion of any thrill.

After a while — a very short while — when they went back to work, the stateroom was empty. There was no scrap of a blue-print of any kind or description. The steward, having discovered them, and 'recognized' them as waste paper, had thrown them through the porthole into the sea! Mr. Olmsted, I have heard, was a pretty cross person, but Mr. French used to say afterwards that he didn't mind very much because it saved them so much work on the trip, and made it much more enjoyable, and, anyhow, he knew Olmsted had all the data in the back of his head and could thus work with greater freedom at home.

In the winter of 1904, Mr. French was appointed a Trustee of the Metropolitan Museum, a position which he has filled ever since, and which has become one of the greatest interests of his life — the association with a handful of distinguished men who have given of their best for the building up of one of the world's great museums.

I remember when he went to take his place at the first meeting, a very trifling incident, but one which impressed itself upon us. Mr. French, although a prompt person, did not realize, not being in the habit of traversing that particular route, how long it would take to go from his studio in West Eleventh Street to the Museum. When he arrived, two minutes late, he found every other man — among the busiest in New York — in his place at the table, and it took him no very long time to realize the devotion of these men to their work.

I have so often at dinners heard the Metropolitan Museum methods criticized, and I always think, although it is hopeless to explain, of these little incidents which these criticisms bring to my mind.

For instance, in spite of the fact, or in spite of the millions that are constantly left to the Museum, I imagine it is not very well known that there is almost never any bequest left for the running expenses. These everyday and uninteresting expenses are partly supplied by the city government, but every year the trustees put their hands into their pockets and supply the deficit — thousands of dollars — whatever it happens to be.

I have heard my husband remark that the best answer to these criticisms was the Museum itself. Founded within the lifetime of people who are still living, some sixty years ago, it has grown to be one of the great museums of the world, has taken its rank with the foreign museums which have been in existence for hundreds and hundreds of years.

In a little book, written by the wife of the President, Mrs. Emily de Forest, are a few paragraphs telling of the founding of the Museum.

In the year 1872, her father, John Taylor Johnston, who was one of the most important of these founders, brought their work of many years to a focus, and the Museum was ready to be opened. The Museum had rented the Dodworth Dancing Academy at 681 Fifth Avenue, near Fifty-Fourth Street. The house was peculiarly adapted for their purpose; two small rooms at the front, the rest of the lot entirely covered by a huge room which had been used for dancing. Here all the works of art and treasures had been collected, and the first evening reception was to be held on February 20, 1872.

Mrs. Johnston and her daughter Emily drove up to the now ready Museum, entered and inspected everything which they of course knew by heart, and approved. In one of the small rooms, however, at the front, there were two

high chests of drawers, or cabinets, standing upon either side of the mantel, and, as the ladies studied them carefully, Mr. Johnston, who had been working endlessly for the perfection of this momentous occasion, remarked, 'Those cabinets look bare. I wish there were something tall that we could put upon each of them.'

After some discussion, Mrs. Johnston suggested, 'I think those Capo di Monte vases in our parlor would make them look — just right.'

They had already loaned everything in their house which they could think of, but were still eager to lend more. So the two ladies drove home, had the Capo di Monte vases brought out — they were seated in a low victoria with Old John upon the box — the vases were stood respectively between the knees of Mrs. Johnston and her daughter, the high and fragile covers they held in their laps. Thus they were driven very carefully by Old John, and the presumably artistic Johnston horses, up Fifth Avenue.

Arrived at their destination, the ladies sat very still indeed while Old John and the one Museum attendant carried in first the covers and then the great white jars. This was about two hours before the reception was to begin. The ladies went in, directed their placing upon the cabinets, went back to their low seats in the victoria, and I am quite sure that Old John, upon the box, drove down to the aristocratic white marble house on Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street, with a conscious pride that the Metropolitan Museum was now open.

I often think of this little story as I stroll through the great halls of the full-grown and still growing Museum, its rooms of jades and porcelains, of armor, of Egyptian relics, or the early American wing, of our own American sculptor

gallery, the crowds — ten thousand sometimes — at the public musicales, the fabulous bequests — and I'm thrilled with the thought that within the lifetime, indeed within the maturity, of one of my friends, these wonders can have taken place.

Mr. French was asked to serve on the Art Commission which was called by Roosevelt to consult as to the forming of a National Art Commission. To tell the truth, the President had no legal authority to appoint such a commission, but there seemed to be a crying need at that time for something definite to be done, which would certainly never have been done if he had waited for all the procedure of two houses of Congress. There were about sixteen members of this commission who went to Washington.

On the morning after their arrival, they assembled at the White House in the East Room. In a few moments the door was thrown open and the President was announced. I have heard Mr. French speak often of his entrance: immaculate of dress, perfectly appointed in every way, brilliant as to complexion, and of course as to teeth, with a fresh buoyancy of manner that was almost theatric. He came over to the group, cordial, responsive, glad to see everybody.

'How do you do, Millet? Haven't seen you for years! How do you do, Hastings? I was just looking at a picture of your library yesterday. How do you do, Mr. French? A great pleasure to meet so distinguished a man.' He made each of them feel entirely at ease and at home, as if he were the particular person he had long wanted to know.

He drew a deep breath, and breathed it out slowly. 'I've just come,' he explained, with his usual fierce deci-

siveness, 'from fighting with my enemies.' He showed his teeth, chewed each word, and flung it out. 'I have just come from fighting with my friends at the other end of the Avenue. I don't always like it much, but I *flatter* myself' — and he mouthed his words — 'that *they* like it less!'

They talked over affairs connected with the Commission, and he showed them, with great interest, various portraits and works of art in the different rooms. Later, when he was leaving, he said good-bye to everybody and started away. At the door he stopped, swung around facing them, and said, showing his teeth in the same fierce manner: 'I go to resume — my interrupted occupation — of *fighting* the *beasts* at Ephesus!' Then he was gone, but I always think of him, thus fearless, indomitable, clean-minded, loving a fight, the splendid daring of the man! Roosevelt's action led to the appointment by Taft of the regular Art Commission which worked for years, and is still making Washington beautiful and preventing the atrocities which would otherwise disfigure it.

I never saw Mr. Roosevelt but once to talk with him, though I have watched him many times. We went in one afternoon to Mrs. Douglas Robinson's to meet Lady Gregory, the Irish writer, who was there. My daughter, at that time a young girl, happened to be with me in the car that afternoon. As we stood at the front door for a moment, delayed by some trivial cause which I have forgotten, she said, 'Look, Mamma, look,' nodding towards the top of the stairs ahead of us, and then in a moment, 'It's Roosevelt, Mamma; it's Roosevelt.'

We waited in the shadow of the front door until he had come down and had disappeared into the drawing-room, my child, just eighteen, thrilled at meeting, thus inform-

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS, 1912

Left to right: Cass Gilbert; Pierce Anderson; Edwin Howland Blashfield; Frederick Law Olmsted; Arno B. Cammerer, Assistant to the Secretary; Daniel Chester French, Chairman; Colonel William W. Harts, U.S.A., Secretary; Thomas Hastings; Charles Moore

ally, the President, and the man who was in everybody's thoughts at the time. Later, when he was introduced to us by his sister, we all stood in a group and talked — there were not more than twenty people in the two rooms — and Margaret has never forgotten the responsive, almost eager, manner with which he greeted her, and made her feel that he was so glad that she had come in, and that he had had this chance to talk to her.

'Where's French?' he asked. I explained that Mr. French seldom went anywhere after he had finished work in the late afternoon, and then I said, laughing, 'Of course he had no idea, Mr. President, that you would be here.'

After a moment, Mr. Roosevelt referred to it again.

'French ought to have come,' he said. 'You ought to have brought him.' And I explained again that Mr. French's work, climbing on stepladders and handling clay, was frequently tiresome. 'Well,' he said, laughing, 'he has a good defender, anyhow.' Suddenly he showed his teeth, and spoke in his usual fierce way: 'Does he know that you defend him like that? Does he *make* you do it? My wife wouldn't defend me. How does he do it? Does he *beat* you?' I always remember it. He was half laughing and yet fierce in his interest.

Also, of course, I lived through the terrible abuse of Roosevelt. As I look back on my life, I feel as if I had always been listening to either the abuse or the deification of some President or another, or some one great man. At one time it was so prevalent, especially among the people whom we knew in New York, that it was really trying to dine at a great many houses.

Sometimes Mr. French would say to me going home in the carriage: 'Really, it's almost embarrassing after dinner

to sit at the table with a group of men, feeling as they all seem to do, bitter, vituperative. I can't feel as they do, and so I just sit still and don't say much of anything, and that kind of makes them mad, too.'

One night, at a dinner at Mr. de Forest's, where there were a group of prominent men gathered together to talk over the affairs of the Metropolitan Museum — I can't remember just who they were, but probably Mr. Morgan, Mr. Henry Walters, Mr. Root, Mr. Choate, and half a dozen others — somebody started, as they often did, on the subject of Roosevelt. They said everything that it was possible to say against him — at least some of them did — and almost nobody said anything in his favor, the few men, my husband among them, who even at that time admired him, keeping quiet rather than raise too much of a free fight.

After a while, one of them spoke up and said, 'Well, we've got to admit this, we came here on rather important business, and whether we like Teddy or hate him, we've given up three quarters of an hour of our valuable time talking about him. It almost seems as if he might be an important person.'

It was only a few years later — less than ten, I should think — that a meeting was held at the Century Club — something in the nature of a memorial meeting, not a service — but Dan said he had a feeling that he was going through a strange experience to sit there and hear these men, many of them the same ones who had been so bitter against Roosevelt, extolling him to the skies.

One evening Mr. French was at an informal gathering at Mr. Morgan's library, where some of the trustees often met. He said that as a group of them stood about the

fireplace, some one commented on the very handsome tiger skin in front of the fire.

'Humph,' said Mr. Morgan, in his abrupt, disgusted manner, 'people ask me if Roosevelt gave me that rug.'

There was silence for a moment, and then Mr. French said in a loud whisper, 'Well, did he?' And for the moment the laugh was turned upon Mr. Morgan.

CHAPTER XII

ARTISTS AND MODELS

In 1897 we bought our place in Stockbridge, about three miles out in the country. We had lived in Concord and had spent two summers in Cornish, but we wanted to be on the direct route to New York with which, in those days, Mr. French felt obliged to keep in touch, both with his own work and especially with that of the Metropolitan Museum and the Academy in Rome, after his work the two great interests of his life.

We journeyed through the different towns of the Berkshires — Williamstown, Lenox, Pittsfield, Great Barrington — and we chose Stockbridge because we loved it from the first moment we looked upon it, the long flat street, with its old houses and great trees, its atmosphere of respectability and culture, and its intimate hills.

The first time we saw the village — we had arrived late the night before — we came out of the hotel, stood under the old elms, and gazed up the street. It was a long, flat, restful street — the quiet old houses, the big trees, and such a convenient opening at the far end for the sun to set, although I admit that that came to us afterwards. We stood still and gazed at it, lost in admiration, just what each of us would like, and just what we, each of us, knew the other would like, and I said decidedly, 'I don't know what you're going to do, but I am going to live here.'

We did not live on the street, which would have been much too public for a studio, but we bought a place about three miles out on a back country road, away from too

much passing, and fortunately, and by accident, away from impending trolleys. It was an old farm with a rambling house and beautiful trees, and a view which had an air of being especially created for our front porch. Years afterwards I was pleased to discover in one of Matthew Arnold's letters — I think to Miss Emily Tuckerman — a few lines proving that our choice was a good one.

'I wish I could go with you to the Warner place,' he wrote, 'and stand where we stood, with my arms upon the bars, and gaze upon that beautiful and soul-satisfying view.'

And there we settled down to live for the rest of our lives, at least in the summer-time.

This was in the early spring. Before we settled down, however, the summer of 1897, we went abroad, making among other travels a trip to Greece, a very wonderful trip to Greece, about which a volume might be written, the first visit of a sculptor to classic lands. However, I know enough not to write about the things which great writers have described, and about which all the world knows more than I do. Far better stick to quaint old Washington in the early days and 'Mamie French's bank,' on which we lived as children, and the background of Presidents, which are only childish memories after all. It is at least safer.

In Athens, Mr. French announced that he had come to Greece to study the Parthenon, and that he was going to spend his life — for a week or two — upon the Acropolis. And so — doing our other sight-seeing around the edges, so to speak — each day we drove out, after an early luncheon, to the great ruin of a godlike civilization, and spent our afternoon there. No one in the way of sight-

seers came until four o'clock, so we had the place for at least two hours to ourselves, and it has given me ever since a feeling of having lived upon the Acropolis.

We separated, the two friends who were travelling with us, with books, Mr. French with his pad and pencil, and I, as usual, wandered away from everybody as far as possible, sat down anywhere, and luxuriated in the sensation that I was breathing in all this beauty which for centuries had dominated the world.

They said afterwards that I had taken a nap upon the steps of the Erechtheum, perhaps a sacred, if not a very comfortable, couch.

Mr. French wandered about, and rested and dreamed in various spots, and studied the great columns upon the ground and the beautiful long lines against the sky, and, incidentally, wrote postals to architects in America, especially his dear friend and collaborator Henry Bacon, to let them know that they could no longer patronize him as to classic lore, that he had been to the fountain-head of beauty, and knew something about the subject himself!

Mr. Arthur Sherburne Hardy was Minister to Greece at that time, and he and Mrs. Hardy did a great deal to make our stay delightful. They took us up on the Acropolis by moonlight, and also we heard 'Antigone' in the Opera House, with a fine Greek chorus. One little incident that amused us was that the actresses, when applauded, responded by coming back and repeating a speech, no matter how long, as they do in opera, and the audience showed its approval by throwing bread and money at their feet.

It was upon this trip that, in Rome, Mr. French was initiated as a member of the Accademia di San Luca. He

RODIN AND THE DUCHESS OF CHOISEUL IN HIS PARIS STUDIO

had been elected a year or two before on the same day, curiously, when was also elected the German Emperor — more of an honor at that time than it would be at present. When he came home from the initiation, he hurried into the room, and said, laughing, 'I want to be kissed — quick — by some *girls*. I have just been kissed on both cheeks by forty men, and I am not used to it.'

This story, we were sorry to hear in after years, had got about and had very naturally hurt the feelings of those kind gentlemen who had welcomed him into their inner circle. It was unfortunate, for Mr. French had been greatly appreciative of being so cordially admitted to their distinguished society, but, upon the spur of the moment, could not refrain from his little joke about this, to him, unexpected mode of welcome.

During that same trip we saw something of Rodin in Paris. Mr. Edward Robinson and Mr. French were consulting with him as to some of his works which were to go to the Metropolitan Museum, and we met him a number of times at his two studios, at Meurdon and in the wonderful Palace in town, and also lunched with him.

He was as simple as a child, and I remember that my daughter and I were flattered because he seemed quite as pleased at our liking his work as if our criticism had been really valuable. He gave us photographs of himself and of the studio, and was eager to write upon the one which he sent my niece, Miss Schoonmaker, and to send her messages of his regret that she was not well at the moment and could not be with us.

In those years before the war, we saw and met, both at 'Chesterwood' and in New York, many interesting and

distinguished people. Although not being very strong myself, and my husband being a worker, our life had seemed to us very quiet and busy. Among them were Joseph H. Choate, Lord Reading, Edith Wharton, Henry James, Zangwill, Hobson, John Burroughs, Paul Manship, and all the other American artists who were, of course, our friends. I remember one day I remarked to Mr. French that I had been to see Mrs. Henry Fairfield Osborn, and that she had told me a wonderful story about having a dinner, with Peary on her right and Amundsen on her left.

'Shouldn't you think she would have been excited?'

'I should indeed,' said Mr. French. 'I should think she would have felt like the Equator.'

Abbott Thayer's and my husband's mutual friend William Brewster, the ornithologist, spent long weeks at our house, almost living in the woods, and educating the young people as to the birds and the trees and the flowers. He and Mr. French had begun their career in bird-lore as little boys together, at that time more attractive than art or book-learning of any kind. It had been somewhat of a disappointment to Mr. French's family that their son Dan had shown no interest in college, living in the shadow of college towns and of learning. He had cared nothing about studying of any kind or about anything outside of his home except to get away to the outdoor life, to collect birds and to stuff them, an art in which his father had given the two boys lessons.

One night we were sitting on the porch listening to the alluring calls of Nature when we heard the hooting of an owl upon the hill back of the studio. Mr. Brewster said, 'Wait a minute, and we'll call him down.' He stepped out

upon the grass, made a horn of his two hands, and 'Too—hoo—too—hoo—too—hoo' — a noise exactly like the one that the owl in the treetop had made. There was dead silence and Mr. Brewster made the noise again — 'Too—hoo—too—hoo.' Half down the slope of the hill came the response. Again Mr. Brewster called, but this time there was no answer — and again and again, but the old fellow was wary and not to be fooled. Finally Mr. Brewster came back to the listening group and sat down. He seemed slightly crestfallen.

'I almost never knew it to fail,' he said.

And suddenly close to us, right over the garden wall, we heard the cry, 'Too—hoo—too—hoo—too—hoo.' The owl had come down the hill, through the woods, and across the garden seeking his mate. He seemed so eager, so insistent that I am quite sure if the young people had not exclaimed aloud with pleasure, he would have flown in and joined us upon the porch.

Mrs. Wharton had a very beautiful place in Lenox, beautiful because she had developed it herself, and whatever she did was perfectly and artistically done. When she sent flowers to the flower show, I remember how perfectly each little cluster was tied up and labelled neatly in her own handwriting, and when we went to her place, she and Mr. French would wander about the grounds, exchanging ideas, she courteous enough to ask his advice, but artistic enough to need little from any one. This early Georgian house, with its formal terrace, its sunken garden, and its rather limited view, like an old tapestry, is one of the most complete and exquisite to be found anywhere in the Berkshires — an example of what can be done in land-

scape gardening by developing every little natural beauty, instead of going in with preconceived ideas and trying to make it like some other beautiful place to which the lay of the land bears no resemblance whatever. Each new development in our little place, Mrs. Wharton always came to see, and brought her friends to see it — among others, Mr. Henry James, whom Mr. French had known years before in London.

Karl Bitter was an Austrian, though he had escaped from Austria early in life, preferring to be an artist rather than a soldier. He was a handsome man with a sabre scar across his cheek from his student days, which gave him a romantic look. He told us one day, when we were sitting upon the side porch, how he happened to be a sculptor.

'I never wanted to be a sculptor. I had never seen a piece of clay or noticed a piece of marble, and I was always painting in the field, whenever I had a chance, and I had always wanted to be a landscape painter. When I was still quite young, some one gave me a small sum of money, and I decided to go and study painting in the great school at the Museum in Vienna. Of course I was greatly scared as I approached the building — I had never been inside, but had heard of the forms and ceremonies through which one had to pass.

'I went up the front steps very timidly, and saw the major-domo with his grand manner. I don't really know what he wore, but he must have had a high head-dress and a baton from the way he affected me. It was a good deal like "Jack and the Beanstalk" approaching the ogre's castle. I tried to explain what I wanted, but my voice was

weak while his was stentorian. He let me enter, however, the great hall with its marble columns — I had never seen such a place before — and he went on explaining what I should do and what I should say to the Maestro when I met him, and he said it gruffly with a mouthful of words.

'I tried to stroll up the great staircase, but he pulled me back, figuratively, and started me in through a big doorway to the left. I went through an empty room simply because I was afraid to go back and address his magnificence whose eyes I could feel upon my back. I went through into another room — a large room — full of young people perched upon stools, cross-legged upon chairs, all making little clay images from a model upon a stand. Some of them were girls and they *looked* at me, and when a young man made a sign towards a seat at one side, I slunk into it for fear the whole room would turn and look at me.

'And that fear held me so fast, so long, that I have never dared to this day to be anything but a sculptor. I always wanted to be a painter, but always the same fears enveloped me. The major-domo in all his magnificence of clothes and manner always expected me to turn into the room at the left; the only people in the room — always modelling — evidently took me for granted.'

'But,' I said, 'you grew to love it afterwards,' and his answer was, 'Well, yes, in a way, but never as I should have loved painting,' and he said it sadly as if he really meant it. 'I never wanted to be a sculptor. I always wanted to be a landscape painter.'

Richmond Hobson I knew only slightly, but he was a charming Southerner. It always seemed to me such a

tragedy that the whole country should have gone wild about him, and then, suddenly, because American women in public places made such fools of themselves, and, because he was slightly inexperienced and unable to cope with the situation, he failed in keeping them in their place, that they should as suddenly turn against him. An intimate friend of his told me that one day he and Hobson were sitting in a hansom, discussing which house of several they should go to first.

'You will hardly believe me,' he said, 'but two women came down the street; not young girls, stylishly dressed, attractive young women. They stood and looked at us; one of them stepped up onto the step of the hansom, took hold of the dashboard, and leaned forward.

'"Are you Mr. Hobson?" said she, almost breathlessly, and before I knew what had happened, the other woman had gone around and stepped up on the step on my side — the middle of the street side — and, for what reason I know not, seemed to be inclined to attack me in the same manner.

'Moved by a sudden impulse, the impulse of possible self-protection, we simultaneously — it must have seemed like a scene on the stage — I put my hand under the two elbows of my newfound lady friend, while Hobson put his two hands under the elbows of the lady nearest him. We lifted them out, and down as gently as we could, precipitated them upon the sidewalk, and in the street, and with a signal to the cocher, drove on without a backward look, to be derided, I suppose, as the most brutal of men.'

Mr. Cyrus Dallin, whom we have always known, tells a nice little story of those early days of '77 or '78 when he

and Mr. French made models of the 'Paul Revere.' It was a competition and Dallin won.

Mr. French never believed greatly in competitions, at least in sculpture. He always felt that the best way to get a work of art was to pick out an artist in whom you believed and to give him a chance to do his best unhampered. If he failed, pay another man and give him his chance. The expense to a struggling young man — a studio, models, the building of elaborate sketches — was to those young artists prohibitive, and the disappointment overwhelming. Also, because the fact that a man can make a good sketch does not necessarily mean that he can carry it out. I used to hear Mr. French and Mr. Saint-Gaudens discuss it, and the thing that impressed me most was that if Mr. French and Mr. Saint-Gaudens never in their younger days won a competition — in later life they never competed — it was certainly not inevitable that latent talent should thus be brought to the front.

In the case of the Dallin story, Mr. Dallin, who had lately come East from Salt Lake City, I believe, and had just begun to attract attention with his Indian sculpture, said that, though he was, of course, pleased to receive the award, he was somewhat overwhelmed by the fact that he was not an Easterner, that he knew he would be looked upon as an outsider, and that he went down to his studio the next morning somewhat discouraged and blue.

The first thing he saw was a small note pushed under his door. This he took into his studio and opened. It was from Dan French, saying, 'I congratulate you. Yours was by far the best model. I'm glad you won.'

This statue, alas! was never carried through, a contin-

gency which often arises owing to some slip in raising the money, or in the procrastination of some Legislature.

Of course, all these interesting people whom I remember in those years before the war were not all at 'Chesterwood.' Many of them we saw at our old house down on West Eleventh Street. Though our life was quiet and hard-working, many of them strolled into it, so naturally that I hardly knew, until I began to think backward, how many and how interesting they were — Janvier, like a big Frenchman, with loose-fitting clothes and a soft tie and a charming breezy manner, who talked of Mistral, and carried the aroma of Provence with him; and Zangwill, tall and stooping and strange-looking, and thinking strange and romantic thoughts.

We used to have dinners at Christmas in the big studio in West Eleventh Street; a big round table with twenty or twenty-five people around it, and we made verses and wrote poems, most of which we never thought of a few hours afterward. But one or two remain, especially those of our dear friend Johnny Mitchell, the editor of 'Life.' I asked his wife one day where they took their Christmas dinner, and when she told me they had gone for the last two years to Sherry's, I was very rightly shocked — real old dyed-in-the-wool Boston and Salem families to go to a *banquet* upon an occasion like Christmas, when turkey and plum-pudding were alone permissible, seemed like a sacrilege! After that, they came to us, and Johnny, as his friends all called him, added greatly to our happiness. One of his classic sayings was a line in an impromptu poem in reference to me:

'And Mary, the favorite wife of Dan.'

Another evening he brought a parcel of letters which he read aloud. He said that when people heard of this dinner to which he was coming, they all wrote to him. One of these letters was attacking a very proper Boston lady who was present, a dear friend of ours and his. The letter was signed 'Colonel Mann,' the editor of 'Town Topics.' Another letter was from Andrew Carnegie.

'I hear,' the old Scotchman wrote, 'that you are going to dine on Christmas with the Frenches, and that brings to my mind a project which has been for years very near to my heart. If you think you could, on the night of the dinner, raise fifty thousand dollars, I would gladly supply the other fifty thousand, and my plan is this: that we shall erect, to stand in Central Park, for all future ages, a statue, nude, and in gold, of Daniel Chester French, Esq.'

Speaking of studios — which have meant so much in my life since my marriage, for whenever we moved to a new place, my husband always seized upon the nearest old barn or shack, before we had a place to eat in, and turned it into a workshop — brings me by a natural mental process to the subject of models, more interesting, possibly, to people outside than inside the artistic life, because it is there shrouded in some sense of mystery, if anything in this age ever is shrouded in mystery!

I have so often heard people say, 'Gracious! She isn't pretty. I don't see why an artist wants to work from her!' And on the other hand, I have often heard an artist answer, 'Oh, no, not pretty at all.' The model might have a very beautiful figure, she might have an unusual length of limb, or she might feel the part, might drop into the pose of the 'Spirit of Light' or the 'Angel of Death,' in-

stead of an attitude that suggested, as Mr. French used to say, a prize-fighter!

As to posing for the nude, to the layman it always seems a curious situation, but to the girl herself it is quite a natural process. A young girl drifts into the studio to make a little money, poses for a portrait in picturesque clothes, later in drapery, later still in chiffon — nobody notices her, nothing seems to make any difference. It is all in the day's work. Later, she drops the chiffon, and there she is, 'the altogether.' Of course the draped models often look down upon their sisters who pose in the nude, and some of them make invidious distinctions along other lines.

'Oh, I pose only for the nice men,' I have heard them say — 'Saint-Gaudens, French, Blashfield, etc., etc. Never for Mr. ——, or Mr. ——, etc.,' — names which of course I should not think of mentioning. One pretty girl, who had been about in the studios and later wrote some memoirs, gave them to us to read.

'There,' she said to Mr. French, 'read them and be thankful that you were *good*.'

I recall a conversation, scraps of which I overheard, between two maids in the kitchen. Inga, the Danish girl, was very pretty indeed, pink and white and blonde and confiding, and judging by the X-ray eye of an artist, as well as by the subsequent conversation, the possessor of a beautiful figure. Tryana was far less alluring, skimpy as to hair, and awkward as to figure.

'I don't see,' she remarked, 'how a woman can stand up in the studio without any clothes on.'

'Well, I don't know,' meditated the pretty girl, 'I shouldn't think she'd mind so very much. Not if her figure was beautiful.'

JESSICA

Two poses of a favorite model

'I wouldn't care what my figure looked like — I'd rather die.'

'Oh, no, you wouldn't — not if you were — really beautiful — it all depends, you see ——'

Perhaps she was right. Our point of view depends so much on our feelings, and our feelings so much upon — well, possibly our figures!

The most interesting model whom I knew in those early years in New York, and whom I knew most about, was Mary R——. She had been a servant, I believe, and had taken on only a very superficial polish. The first thing that I remember about her was when Mr. French wrote — I was away from home: 'I'm having rather a hard time, because Mary shut her false teeth up in a folding bed, and I don't know exactly what to do with the beautiful mouth of my angel.'

Before our marriage, my husband spent a winter in the studio of F. E. Elwell, his own house not being ready for him, and that winter Mary R—— posed for Elwell for a big figure. It was then that I grew, more or less on hearsay, to be so intimate with her. She was of a very simple extraction, but she had posed round so long for men and women of the artistic world that she had greatly improved as to manner and bearing with, be it said, startling relapses. She had a greatly admired friend whom the inmates of the studio had never seen, but with whose habits and characteristics they were familiar. Mary talked about her constantly. This friend was evidently dainty and attractive, and it was these qualities that so greatly appealed to Mary.

'Gracious, I wish you could see her — that Sally Graham — she ain't a bit like me. You'd like her. *She's* re-

fined, she's awful refined.' Then she would sigh, 'Golly! I wish I could be refined.'

One morning she came in and announced that she had turned over a new leaf, that they'd got to be careful what they said to her, and how they treated her — Elwell, to be sure, was sometimes easy-going in his manners.

'Sally Graham has been talking to me, and I'm going to try to be like her. I can if you don't say things to make me forget!'

Once or twice during the morning — all this time she was seated on the modelling stand entirely free of clothes — she would begin to speak, stop, and, without changing her pose, remark: 'Oh, I forgot! I was being refined.' Later in the day, Elwell, who was bursting with spirits, knelt upon the edge of the model-stand, raised one hand in her direction, and made some absurdly complimentary remark. Mary watched him a moment, her head slightly to one side, her eyes half laughing, her lips pursed.

'Shut *up*!' she said amiably, as if she were being tempted. 'If I wasn't refined — I'd give you a clap side the jaw!'

Of course Mary, like any other model who posed for the 'altogether,' had no more consciousness of being naked than the rest of us have of wearing clothes. When she rested for any length of time, she put a wrap or a bath-robe about her, and she dressed and undressed behind a screen, for these things were custom.

One day, when she came into the studio, she took off the big hat which she was wearing, threw it aside, and remarked that that hat was never becoming to her. Later, during one of her rests, she stepped down from her stand, went over to the lounge, brought back the hat, sat down

on the seat which for an hour she had been occupying, and proceeded to take off the feathers and rearrange them. She sat there, twisting them about, her mouth full of pins, her head first upon one side and then upon the other, studying her handiwork, and then, seeing that Mr. Elwell was busy, she gathered up her work, descended from her perch, went over to the long mirror, and stood in front of it.

She took no more notice of her figure than if she had been swathed in black from her neck to her toes. It was only the hat that interested her. She placed it on her head, bent the feathers about, tilted it a little on one side, pulled it down a little on the other side, turned herself about — a full front view, a half side view, an anxious glance over her shoulder at the back of the hat, and stood there, interested, pleased, admiring, like an Eve who had just escaped from a Garden of Eden into a Fifth Avenue millinery shop — quite unconscious of Mr. French's amusement in the background.

Yet this young Eve in the Gainsborough head-dress had her standards, higher and truer than those of many conventional people whom we meet. When the poses were long, she wrapped her bathrobe about her beautiful figure. If, in an absent-minded moment, the bathrobe slipped, she drew it back into place, or perhaps pinned it together as carefully and naturally as if she had never heard of the 'altogether.'

On one occasion, when one of the men had been at a fashionable dinner party the night before, and referred to the fact that one or two of the dresses were horribly low — it was the fashion at that time for the decolleté to run down in a 'V' in the front and liable to escape all bounds or even

all waist-bands in the back if the wearer did not mind — Mary listened to the account and the accompanying laughter with rather surprised eyes.

'I didn't suppose real ladies did that,' she said; and later, 'I don't see how they *can* show off their figures that way — just — for the sake of showing them off.'

Of course all kinds of funny things happened in the studio, both at New York, and 'Chesterwood.' One of the funniest was in the studio of a friend, who happened to have a very affectionate, intelligent little dog, a terrier who naturally had the run of the place.

A young woman, coming one day for the first time to pose for the 'altogether,' left her wearing apparel behind the screen, and took her place upon the model-stand in the middle of the floor. Almost immediately the artist noticed that the small dog seemed to be greatly interested. Two or three times he ran over to the stand, stopped in front of it, and stood for a moment lost in admiration of the young girl, pretty and white and graceful, her head thrown up, her hands outstretched.

'He must be,' the artist commented, 'a great admirer of beauty.'

Suddenly the dog darted about the room, pushed things about, smelled under the furniture, and seemed in a fury of excitement. This he did several times.

Then he sat a long time in deep, though agitated, meditation. By and by, as if he had arrived at a satisfactory canine decision, he suddenly darted away, now and then with a backward glance, and disappeared behind the screen, the disrobing screen. For a moment they heard him scurrying about, busy, perhaps, looking for a bone. Suddenly he appeared dragging behind him a heavy black

coat. With his teeth he held it by one sleeve, the long article of woman's wearing apparel spread out like a procession behind him. Stopping now and then, he dragged it slowly, if eagerly, across the floor, brought it to the edge of the model-stand, laid it down, looked up with snapping eyes and parted lips, at the young person above him, who ought to be cold and neglected — even if she were not — and began to bark and jump about, bursting with sympathy and approval.

My little girl used to like to go down and watch her father at work, and amuse herself with the clay and other enticing things which she found lying about. Not being an artist at that early age, she was usually sent away if a model were coming. This seemed entirely natural to her. But one day she came upstairs, her feelings, if not hurt, at least troubled.

She stood and looked at me, and in an injured tone said, 'I couldn't go — in — the studio.'

'Why not?' I asked.

'I don't know. Papa said, "No, don't come in."'

'Was there any one there?'

'Yes,' her voice growing more and more injured. 'There was a lady there, but — she had her clothes on.'

Mr. French was never very good at remembering names or, indeed, remembering the people to whom the names belonged. It was rather a joke in the family that he sometimes forgot the why and the wherefore, even of a pretty woman he greatly admired.

One day his man came into the studio and said there was a lady upstairs to see him, so Mr. French ran up the

rather long flight of stairs into the small reception room above, where sat a very pretty woman with pink roses in her hat. Even when he was interrupted in his work, he was nothing if not polite. The woman was pretty and young, and looked in a general way familiar. She was probably some friend of mine, or some one who had dined with us in a different gown a few nights before, so he rushed forward, took her hand, bowed rather effusively, and said impressively that he was delighted to see her.

The young woman glanced at him and without a smile said, 'Shall I take my waist off?'

And gradually, very gradually, there came over Mr. French a faint glimmer of remembrance that Dewing had a day or two before written that he had discovered a young woman with the most perfect shoulder and arm he had ever seen, and that he would send her around some morning soon.

One beautiful day — this was, of course, in the summer time at 'Chesterwood' — I went out into the garden, and saw something that made us all laugh when I recounted it at the lunch table — the kind of thing that happens often, but only in the abode of an artist.

There was a young man at that time posing for Mr. French, who was an Assyrian, with a peculiar thin dark face and rather long hair about his shoulders. Mr. French had been amused because this young man had discovered, lying about somewhere, the book of the Apocrypha, which he had never seen before, and over which he had pored with great interest whenever he was free, so that the combination which I saw before me was natural

enough, though curious: a tall, slim, long-haired Assyrian, dressed in a George Washington uniform, meditating, in an Italian garden, eating apples, and studying the lost books of the Bible!

CHAPTER XIII

CHESTERWOOD AND THE WAR

We settled down, as I have said, in an old Stockbridge farmhouse, pretty, but inconvenient, with its lovely view from the porch, and its great woods behind, spent a good deal of money on it, and finally decided that we must have a new house.

We built a new house, not so much because we wanted a new house as because we wanted a new bathroom, that is, a bathroom that was really a bathroom, and which could be entered in some other way than through the parlor or the china closet. In the old house we had put the bath in a tiny room on the ground floor, and when we came downstairs with our towels and our soap and our tooth-brush, the inhabitants of the living-room had to disappear while we passed through. I could have no dressing-room except a closet; there was no place for the linen, and a disrespectful cousin claimed that he couldn't sit up in bed at night without bumping his head on the ceiling.

This reminds me of the efforts of my cousin Mrs. E—— in trying to take a bath. We all had to double up a good deal; my little girl claimed that when she went to bed at night she never knew where she was to wake up in the morning, for my family insisted on having a house full of company whether there was sufficient room or not. My cousin Mrs. E—— at that time rooming with my child, discovered a very big closet at the back of the room, and decided that it was an ideal place for her morning ablutions. She carried numerous articles for her bath into this

closet, which was large and airy, with a window looking into the woods — her pitcher and basin and slop-pail and soap-dish — and, being a very tidy person, a dozen other articles which seemed to be necessary. There was a flat-topped trunk on which she arranged her basin and toilet articles, and proceeded, conscious of a nice cosy privacy which any one might be excusable for enjoying in a bath. Having plenty of time to think in the intervals of splashing, she began to wonder and admire the size and comfort of the closet which she had discovered. Why should any one, in a house so simple, desire anything more large and luxurious than this, with its window looking into the woods, and a door which she had just closed into my daughter's room?

Gradually it came over her that there were a great many doors for a dressing-room. There seemed to be closets within closets. She went on with her splashing, dressed herself leisurely and properly, and discovered only at the breakfast table, when she asked why that closet wasn't made into a real bathroom, that that closet was not a closet at all — that it was the back entry! Besides the door through which she had entered was one leading downstairs into the kitchen, another into the room of the Irish cook, and a third into that of a new and fastidious gentleman visitor. This little incident, and also the fact that our gentlemen guests were so constantly disturbed in their reveries before the parlor fire by young ladies in deshabille, who begged them not to turn around as they hurried in and out of the only bathroom, decided us that we must have a different kind of bathroom, even if we had to have a new house attached to it. So we built our house. The studio had been built the first year of our life on the farm,

and by this time was growing into its place in the landscape, the big doors at the back leading out into the small formal garden, the walks of the garden leading into the winding paths of the woods. I went out there one morning — this only a year or two ago — and found them all working, my husband naturally, my daughter modelling a relief, Mr. Walter Clark with a pretty young girl seated upon a stand before him. I wondered aloud whether they realized what beautiful surroundings were theirs, compared with a plain room in a business block in a great noisy city; the victrola was playing softly, the doors were open into the little garden, the fountain was tinkling away, the birds splashing about its edges, the sun shining, the woods cool and fresh in the background, and they called this — work!

It was during these early years of life at 'Chesterwood' that Mr. French made the 'Standing Lincoln' for Lincoln, Nebraska. When it was finished, we gave a tea in its honor, and people came, as they always come to see Lincoln anywhere, from all over the country. It had been built in a sort of extra studio, down upon a hillside, where it could be rolled out upon a platform, and we could go down below and criticize it. And I remember how picturesque it was, on a perfectly beautiful afternoon, to see the groups of people, women in bright clothes, wandering down across the field to see 'Lincoln's Shrine,' as they called it.

When it was set up in Nebraska, Mr. French and our daughter went on for the unveiling, where they met Mr. Bryan and were pleased, as people always were, by the charm and naïveté of his manner. They brought back with them a curious story which he had told about himself, and which I have never happened to hear anywhere else.

He said that upon one occasion when he was making a very important speech, he was greatly impressed by the attention of a man in the audience. The man sat a few rows from the front, and, as the speech went on, seemed to grow more and more absorbed. He hung upon the speaker's words, his face fairly twitching with excitement. Mr. Bryan said that he felt so flattered that he found himself watching his admirer more and more closely, until finally he was conscious that he was addressing himself to that one man, oblivious of the rest of the audience. It was inspiring to have such a listener and he was conscious of being unusually eloquent.

Later in the evening, the man came upon the platform, watched his chance, and seized upon the hand of the speaker.

'I've watched you every minute,' he said breathlessly. 'I've never taken my eyes off your face.'

He was so eager, so impassioned, that Mr. Bryan felt a thrill go through him; here was something worth while, and the man went on:

'I'm a dentist and I've never before in my whole professional life seen a speaker who, when he laughed, showed both rows of teeth all the way round.'

There was a curious little incident about the Lincoln which artistically appealed to the man who made it. It seems that a small model had been sent out to Nebraska, not only for the committee to see, but to be placed upon exhibition. People were friendly enough to be greatly interested in it, and there was more or less discussion. It seems that after the small model had arrived, but before it was unboxed, some one at the house of Mr. Hall, the chairman of the committee, had remarked: 'My mother

was a young girl when she first saw Lincoln, several times, travelling and making speeches. She said he had a curious way of standing just before he began to speak, with his hands clasped as if he were collecting his thoughts.'

And next day when the box was opened, this woman was greatly pleased, also greatly surprised, to find the statue in just the pose in which her mother had described the great man on the eve of his speeches. Lincoln had been made to stand — the Gettysburg Speech on a big slab in the background — his head a little drooping, his arms straight down, his hands clasped, as if he were thinking deeply. Mr. French had said at the time that he had 'kind of felt as if he must have stood like that, those few moments before his address.'

In connection with studio life and the making of statues, there is one question — grave to every sculptor — which is naturally little understood by the outside world — the question of expense. A burning question, this, I admit, to all professional people, but I think that the architect and the sculptor are necessarily more hampered by the demands of their trade, as a trade, than any one else.

A large room — for architectural sculpture a huge room — is an absolute necessity. The clay, the wax, the setting-up of statues and busts, the skilled carpentry work, heavy express charges, models, the turning of the clay into plaster, and later the turning of plaster, by skilled workmen, into bronze or marble — all, unless a man is highly paid, eat up a large part of the profits.

I have known, in Mr. French's case, that sometimes when a statue was put in place, it was found that the entire large appropriation — in one case some $50,000 —

was entirely used up in the expenses of casting, stonework, water for the pool, etc. Except in the case of another appropriation being made, there would be nothing left for the sculptor.

A young friend of ours, a rather successful artist, once said to me: 'You see I've never had a chance to do my best with a piece of work. The prices I've had to accept have been so small that I have had to hurry up and put it through, because if I took my time, as a more famous man would do, the whole appropriation would be used up, sometimes doubled, in the expenses of studio, assistants, etc. I not only should have nothing myself, I should be in debt.'

The attitude of the newly rich toward art is of course sometimes amusing, though it has been only occasionally that Mr. French has come in contact with it. Our friend Mr. C—— tells a story of bringing to the studio a newly rich and supposedly artistic man, who wanted a bust made of himself. Mr. French explained that he hardly ever made busts nowadays; he felt that his hand was, in this line, out of practice, etc. The man persisted, and Mr. French also persisted that his time was too taken up for him even to consider it at present.

'Oh, I think you can get it in,' said the visitor cheerfully. Then, dropping his voice, 'You know, I have plenty — money is no object to me.'

'Yes,' responded Mr. French quietly, 'I too am fortunate enough to have a competency — money is no object to *me*.'

I doubt whether Mr. French ever said exactly this, but the spirit of the conversation is quite true. It is the kind of thing that often happens.

But a story that appealed to me even more was about one of the great captains of industry. He wanted a statue of a certain kind for a certain place. He commissioned his architect to ask Mr. French — not to give the order, but to make a model on approval. Mr. French said that he should be glad to do so and submit the model, but that he charged for his designs, and that the price would be $500. Shortly after this, the architect received a letter from the captain of industry saying: 'What's the matter with these artist fellows? What does French mean by charging for a design? Tell him that when I want a job, I go for it! Why, I've crossed the ocean in search of a job.' This so amused the architect that he told us about it, and Mr. French's comment was, 'Tell Mr. R——' — which was by no means his initial — 'that it's a great many years since I have had to go to Europe, or anywhere, to get a job.'

I have often wished that I knew Mr. R——. I've thought I should like to tell him that story with explanations. He is a big man in his way, and I know that he must have a sense of humor and would appreciate the idea, if his attention were called to it, that he could not approach a work of art as he would a leak in the bathroom.

Of course the War came to us like a bomb here in our little garden as it came to all the gardens of the world — great and small.

But I know better than to write much about the War. I shall tell only a few little episodes which never could have happened but for the terrible struggle through which we were living, which cut our lives in half, and made many of us feel that we were starting out anew.

We all worked with the Duryea Relief. My daughter

was secretary, and I worked through several years in various positions of no great importance, but of great interest. How we all worked! How we all economized! My family still claim that I undermined their constitutions by my household economies. How we all gave as if we could never again need an heirloom, or a competency for our old age, and how cross we all were with those who ate more than we did or gave less! Miss Clara Barton, the great Red Cross founder, was a friend of my father, and I was often reminded of something she used to say, 'You will find that the people who give, give and give, and keep on giving, and the people who don't give, don't give at all.'

My daughter also worked under Major Lamond in the Debarkation Hospital Number Three, full of tragedies and comedies which we cannot forget.

There was one boy, Ashi, of an Assyrian family, I think, but born here, an American — we like to claim all good foreigners — whose name among his friends in and out of the ward became a household word. He had lost one leg at the hip, the other at the knee, and part of one hand. He was in bed, and slowly getting well and was the life of the ward.

My daughter went and stood beside him. 'Now, Ashi,' she said, 'have you written home and told them?'

'Yes.'

'Sure?'

For it was a law in the hospital that the soldiers, if they were well enough, should write home about their condition, in order to prevent the scenes that were likely to take place when the broken-hearted mothers and fathers came for them.

'Oh, yes,' said Ashi carelessly, 'I wrote 'em all right.

They seem kind of upset about it, but it doesn't bother me much.'

Another day he called to her, going the rounds in the ward. 'Sister, come here. Something to show you.' He held up a pair of long woollen stockings. 'That crazy Red Cross,' he said. 'Look what they've done. Sent *me* a pair of stockings — one for each leg. Isn't that the greatest?'

Later this youth was sent down to the Walter Reed Hospital in Washington and it was from there that she heard from him in the spring.

'Some of the fellows are to be sent up to be in the Parade — the 27th — with Ryan at its head. I am going to have my new legs by that time, and if they fit good perhaps I might come. Do you think you could do anything about it?'

Of course she did a great deal about it — wrote to the State Department and to the officers in various directions who might help.

The night before the Parade, my daughter did not get home from the hospital until late, and, when we wondered about it, 'Why, it is just a chance,' she said, 'that I got home at all. Some of the men' — meaning her friends and co-workers — 'will be there most of the night.'

A troopship had arrived — two thousand, where they had expected one, with nowhere to sleep except on the floor on a rug or a blanket.

Major Lamond, the Red Cross Head, announced, to the delight of his assembled aides, 'We'll take 'em up tomorrow morning to see the show. Let 'em see how we feel about the boys who are coming home.'

'But,' said military discipline, 'half of them are ill.'

'We'll take the well ones, and they can come back and tell the others about it.'

'But they haven't any clothes.'

'Oh, let them go in pajamas, or blankets, or any old thing. The fun of it will keep them warm.'

And up they went, nearly half of them in pajamas, hatless, blankets about their shoulders, some of them in wheeled chairs.

The pavements for a whole block between Eighteenth and Nineteenth Streets were green with benches from the houses down to the edge of the curb, and here were the men, just back from years of suffering and horrors, to see how people at home felt about them.

Then the Red Cross girls hurried back to Sixth Avenue, denuded every shop within a block of everything in the way of candy, crackers, cigarettes, brought them back to Fifth Avenue, and kept their charges supplied, for the breakfasts that morning and the suppers the night before had been sketchy. The girl attendants went among them, feeding them apples, crackers, chocolate, now and then a hot drink, and pulling up a blanket, for the early morning was cold.

As the regiments passed, they cheered and sang both in the street and on the sidewalk, called to each other, joked, every one eager, happy, thrilled. And then came the long line of motors with the wounded soldiers who had come, under difficulties, to shout their welcome to their friends. And there my daughter suddenly saw, in the sixth car, a young man waving and smiling at her, and she knew that it was Ashi, a rug over his knees, a nurse beside him. She ran out, jumped upon the running-board, and rode up the street with him, he quite sure that it was through her good graces alone that he was there.

Ashi went on with his study of law, which he had begun before the War, and graduated. Later, during the Disarmament Conference in Washington, where my daughter was living, Ashi came to luncheon with her. She told the butler to be sure to help him upstairs, but he scorned all assistance, and with the aid of two canes came up to the drawing-room, cheerful and laughing as always. A friend had brought him to the house and was to call for him in an hour and a half.

When it was time for him to leave, Ashi said: 'I wish you'd come down and see Smith, if you wouldn't mind. He'd love it so. You see he can run a car, because he's got one good leg.'

So she went down and sat in the back of the car and had a good time going over hospital days with them, and they went off, the two young men in the front seat, happy and laughing because they had one good leg between them and could run a car as well as anybody.

There was one story told by a woman in the hospital which, as she told it, was very dramatic. She had been a Red Cross nurse in France, and when the time came for her to leave her work, she felt very sad and very sentimental at the thought of saying good-bye to her charges. She had been with these boys for months, had helped some of them back to health, and prayed for others in their suffering.

They were such dear, patient, cheerful boys, and she knew that many of them had come to depend upon her and to love her. She had changed her Red Cross uniform for street clothes and stood there looking at them in their rows of beds, up and down the two walls of the room, some of them propped up, some of them flat on their backs, some

of them in harness, all of them with their eyes pinned upon her face. What could she say to them to show how much she cared, how much she hated to cease from her labor, how hard it was to say good-bye. She felt her eyes fill and her lips tremble.

'Boys,' she said — she was a middle-aged woman with white hair, but young-looking and very handsome — 'Boys,' she said impulsively, 'I'm going to kiss you good-bye. Every one of you, just as if I were your mother.'

'I started down the line,' she explained, 'bent over and touched with my lips the forehead of first one boy and then another. Most of them lay very still, many of them with their eyes fixed upon mine, and I felt that it moved them, the deep maternal undertone of my farewell.

'I went down the line among the twelve beds upon one side, and started up among the beds upon the other side, more and more touched by the way in which each boy received it.

'Suddenly, as I straightened up from the bed of one youth all done up in bandages, my eyes went out down the line across the beds ahead of me — there were four of them now — and in the end bed was a big fellow flat upon his back, his eyes turned in my direction. His face was black!

'Something went through me like a chill. I could hardly take my eyes away from him. I was not a Southerner, but I had all the instinctive prejudices with which the majority of American women have grown up. I went forward mechanically, moved on to the next boy, bent down, and, as I straightened up, I felt again those big brown eyes, with their glistening white circles, watching me. I moved forward again. I think I did not hesitate, I was sure that I must go on, that he was one of my soldiers for whom I

had helped care, a quiet, gentle fellow about whom I had quite forgotten until now.

'I moved on to the second bed, and then to the one next the colored youth. I found myself saying a half-prayer, "Help me! You *must* help me!" I knew that the other boys in the other beds were watching curiously to see what I would do. I went on slowly, half blindly, with cold chills running up and down my spine, until I came to him, and found myself leaning down over the black face, turned up towards mine.

'"Lady," he said in his quiet, half-deprecating voice — "Lady, you don't has to kiss me."

'"Oh, yes, I do," I said more naturally than I could have done before he spoke. "Oh, yes, I do, you're one of my heroes too." And as my lips touched his forehead, he lay so still and peaceful and wondering — it almost seemed a benediction to us both.'

There was the terrible abuse of Wilson — almost worse than the abuse of Roosevelt. I began to feel as if I could not stand the abuse of any more Presidents.

My cousin Mrs. S——, an exceedingly pretty and attractive woman, was greatly upset by this feeling towards the President, not because she was a violent partisan, but, her father being a good Democrat and a friend of the two recent Democratic Presidents, she had been educated in his footsteps, and she was conscious of many ideas and opinions which she was not able to express. There was in the town where she lived a small group of prominent men, bankers, judges, business men, friends of her husband, of whom they saw a good deal, who were all Republicans and swept along in the popular swim of vituperation.

'I don't know what to do, Mary,' she said plaintively. 'I have been brought up to admire Wilson. I've read a good deal and have tried to inform myself, but I can't keep up with those men. They know a lot more as to facts than I do, but I know enough to know that they are awfully unfair and prejudiced. They all talk at once and sometimes altogether, and they drown me out. I just don't know what to do.'

Finally, one night when they were all dining together — there were two or three other women present, but they were nice obedient wives, who thought as their husbands thought — the conversation came around to the absorbing subject of Wilson, and they sailed along saying everything that any one could think of by way of abuse.

Once or twice early in the dinner, my cousin made a feeble effort to ask a question, or to quote some line of wisdom culled from her father, but they turned on her, one at a time, or all of them together.

'What do you think of his speech at such and such a dinner?' some one would ask politely, in an icy tone. 'What do you think of his saying ——?' My poor cousin! 'How could I keep track,' she said, 'of all the dinners he had ever been to? What did I know about any particular statement? — statements in general? But I did know that these men couldn't be fair; that they had quite lost their heads as far as Wilson was concerned.'

She stood it just as long as she could, then she rose to her feet — and she must have looked very pretty and attractive standing alone, flushed and excited and defiant. She lifted her wineglass and held it high. She leaned forward, and said with spirit:

'I drink — to the health — of the President of the United States!'

There was dead silence; for a minute no one moved. It was as if a bomb had exploded in the middle of the table, and then, very gradually, they came back to their senses. One man rose to his feet feebly, and then another, and so on until they were all standing, solemn and lugubrious, while she repeated her toast:

'I drink to the health of the President of the United States!'

And all of those men lifted their glasses, repeated the toast, and drank to Wilson. Later, of course, when their sense of humor came to their rescue, they laughed, as I suspect their pretty young adversary is laughing yet.

We were all greatly agitated — at the time the whole country was agitated — over the Dumba affair. The Austrian Embassy was spending the summer in Lenox, and while Mr. French and I, in our quiet corner, saw little of them, they naturally were part of the life of the neighborhood. Some of them lived at the Aspinwall, and, besides the Ambassador, there were in his party, the Baron K——, who was acting Ambassador a large part of the time, and his very distinguished-looking wife, two young men who added to the gaiety of the summer, and various other officials, and there was little animosity against the Austrians. Some people were really neutral, some dearly loved a title — it was said that little Mrs. —— became pro-German overnight!

It happened at just that moment that my daughter was having a small dance in the studio. It was a fancy-dress party and had grown to be something of an institution.

The question arose as to whether we should ask the Austrians. I had seen but little of them, but the young people felt that they must be invited, especially the two attractive young men who had been about to all the dances.

The invitation was sent, and upon our part promptly forgotten. We thought that possibly the two young men might come. The dance was to be on a Saturday night and on the Wednesday before, the papers came out in great headlines that the Austrian Ambassador had been discovered in a plot.

It seems to have been a fact that Dumba had sent home a letter, seized by the British, implicating the Austrian Embassy with Von Papen and the plots for the destruction of munitions in the United States. The country — especially the newspaper country — was in an uproar. To us up here in our little Berkshire circle, the Austrians became an absorbing question. What would they do? Would they come to the dance? Would some of them come?

Baron Dumba, himself, was away at the time, or at least he left immediately. But Baron K——, his first secretary, had been acting Ambassador much of the time, and he and his handsome wife had been apparently fond of society.

If Madame K—— stayed away — we imagined the questions under discussion — it would look like an admission of guilt. If she came, it was just possible that the many people who had before been civil might resent her presence under the circumstances and look upon it as an intrusion.

Diplomatic comings and goings are of course arranged by rule, and yet in an extreme case, such as this — indeed

a case as yet unadmitted — the personal equation must enter to some degree.

The next day, Thursday, some one from the hotel told us that while the Austrians had kept to themselves as much as possible, while they had been 'very busy,' Madame K—— had told some one that they were certainly coming to the dance on Saturday evening.

The next day, Friday, my daughter and I were at home to our friends, as was our custom, and late in the afternoon, after every one had gone, I strolled off for a walk down the driveway, being omnivorous as to exercise.

Some half an hour later, at nearly seven o'clock, as I came home, there passed me, turning out of the driveway, a small brown trap with a brown horse. In it sat Madame K—— and a young man. We waved to each other, and I went on to the studio, where I found my family and my house guests somewhat amused at what had just happened. It seems that shortly after I left, well after six o'clock, there appeared in the garden, at the studio door, Madame K—— and the young man whom I had seen in the trap. She was so sorry to be late; they had wanted to be sure to call before the dance; the Baron had intended coming with her, but had been unavoidably detained, which was why they were so late; she was charmed with the studio and the garden — such a wonderful place for a dance; she and the young man made themselves most agreeable and said good-bye, looking forward to seeing us all again the next night. Of course every one knew that they had come late deliberately so as to meet as few people as possible.

The next afternoon, Saturday, the day of the dance, at about four o'clock, while Mr. French was working alone in the studio, the Baron appeared. He also had an un-

known, or at least an unremembered, young man with him, and he, also, was most affable and agreeable. He had been detained by business the day before and could not come with his wife, which he greatly regretted; and he was so overwhelmed with business affairs that he could not possibly come to the dance, but he wanted to be sure and pay his respects to Mr. and Mrs. French. He seemed very much inclined to talk, several times upon the edge of dangerous ground, to which Mr. French did not respond, partly because we were all greatly agitated upon this subject, and he, being host, felt it safer not to enter into discussions.

Finally, in reference to his accumulated work, the Baron referred to this 'little episode' which had caused such an excitement in our papers. And later, even without encouragement, went on to say, 'Of course you understand that this little affair will all be cleared up. It must be. Dumba would not for a moment do anything that was in the least wrong.'

Mr. French did venture to remark, 'Well, it looks to me as if somebody had done something at least very unwise.'

Baron K——, at this, shrugged his shoulders, made no further comment, certainly no denial, moved about among the busts and statues in the studio, and, in a few moments, left.

That evening, the evening of the dance, among the early arrivals was an old friend of mine who had known Madame K—— abroad.

The first thing she said was: 'Madame K—— sent you a message. She came down to dine in ordinary clothes, and later said she was going up to dress for the dance, but not in costume. Later still, just before we left, she came down-

stairs into the lobby where some of us had assembled, sought me out, and asked me to explain to you that at the last moment she was obliged to give up the pleasure of coming, that K—— did not feel at all well and she must not leave him: to tell you how sorry they both were.'

This, of course, was supposed to be final. But at about a quarter to eleven, some one grabbed my arm, and said, 'Look! Look!' And there in the doorway stood Madame K—— and by her side the young man who had accompanied her the day before. Naturally I went and spoke to her and introduced some young men, with whom she danced several times. The young men, I afterwards found out, were most enthusiastic about her looks and manners.

To me, she was always distinguished-looking — handsome features, her head erect, great animation, soft brown hair, drawn back and twisted loosely. Her clothes were hardly as striking as the clothes of American women, but there was a natural distinction and breeding about her looks that was unusual. Some people were most bitter towards the Austrians, and thought there was something sinister about her face. Perhaps there was. It was, at any rate, more interesting to think so.

At supper-time she came up to me, quickly, almost hurriedly, and explained that she had only come for a few minutes, that the Baron was far from well, that she had just run away from him long enough to pay her respects; and she and her escort were gone almost before I had time to express my regrets.

It was, altogether, an amusing little episode to us, living, as we did, away from diplomatic complications.

The two young men, the secretaries of the Embassy, did

not appear, and I understood that they kept very much to themselves and were as dignified as they could be in such an unpleasant predicament. They both, afterwards, married American girls, and thus vindicated, at least, their good taste.

CHAPTER XIV

STOCKBRIDGE

The twin towns of Stockbridge and Lenox are rather different from other neighboring villages, because they run so intimately into each other. Many of the houses, apparently in Lenox, pay taxes in other towns. Many of the houses are only a stone's throw from their neighbor across the border. I said to a friend in Lenox one day, 'You are so good to help us on our committees and teas in Stockbridge.' And her answer was, 'Oh, but I am quite as fond of Stockbridge as of Lenox, and you know I don't live in either! I really live in Lee!' Many of the same people from Boston and New York, who have always known each other, have come to the adjoining towns for years.

When I first went to Stockbridge and began to look about me, I found, as an outsider, many things of interest. There was standing at that time the curious old house of Jonathan Edwards where is now, to mark the spot, a sundial upon the lawn of Mr. Brown Caldwell's place. At the end of the street, jutting out over the golf meadows, was, and is, the old Indian burying-ground, with its monument. 'To the Friends of Our Forefathers, the Stockbridge Indians.' Up on the hill on the old Field estate stood the Mission House, built in 1740, by the Reverend John Sargeant, who was the first missionary to the Stockbridge Indians. This has been moved to the village street by Miss Mabel Choate, renovated with old-time surroundings, and made interesting as a memorial to her father.

THE SCULPTOR IN HIS GARDEN

Then there is the Sedgwick Mansion where the little Marquand baby is, I believe, the seventh in descent, to sleep in at least one of its great square bedrooms. It is a beautiful old house, back from the street, and ought to be painted white, or at least a light color, but, having by some ancestor been painted a red-brown, the present inhabitants plead they can never afford a white coating, as it is so big and it would take so many coats to prevent the dark tints from showing through.

When I first lived here, Mr. Henry Sedgwick was an elderly gentleman, in appearance a typical handsome old country squire, with soft grey locks about his ears, a dignified figure, and kindly smile. There was the story, an old chestnut, to be sure, of the newcomer who years ago wandered down the village street, and asked, gazing at the red-brown mansion, 'What house is that?' 'Oh,' said his friend, 'that is the Sedgwick house.' There were not many people abroad, and when a fine-looking elderly woman passed, he turned and asked, 'Who is she?' 'Oh, that is Mrs. Sedgwick,' came the answer.

Later he saw a thin, middle-aged man with a cane hurrying down the street, and asked, absent-mindedly, 'Who is that man?' The answer came, also absent-mindedly, 'Oh, that is Mr. Sedgwick.' Still later, when he saw some children fighting or playing, or possibly doing both, and inquired about them, he was told, 'Oh, some of the Sedgwick children.'

So he strolled along down the street, across the meadows to the river, where he stood and meditated upon the bridge. 'Listen to the frogs,' suggested his friend. 'And I'll be damned,' said the visitor, in telling the story later, 'if they weren't every one of them saying, "Sedgick, Sedgick,

Sedgick," every one of those old bull-frogs chanting the Sedgwick litany.'

And there were the Crowninshields, the wittiest family altogether that it has been my pleasure to know; and the Tuckermans, especially, during my time, Miss Emily, whose high character and love of the beautiful made her a power in the life of the town. And the Choates — that great man Joseph Choate, greatest of all to the friends and neighbors who knew him and loved him.

And there was Miss Mary Jane Goodrich, the oldest inhabitant, hobbling down the street with her cane — a very brisk kind of hobble, to be sure — and her memories. She knew more about Stockbridge than any one else living — about the old people, the old houses, the old stories — but lately, alas! she has passed on to another world and carried her secrets with her.

The Laurel Hill Association is the first village improvement society, founded in 1839, whose annual meeting in September is a great event in the countryside. The meeting is held in the woods back of the schoolhouse, in a beautiful natural glade, where, against a wall of rock upon one side, a rostrum built by the Sedgwick family serves as a woodland amphitheatre. Here, at the annual meeting in the fall, discussions as to the affairs of the village, or the country at large, take place. The great men from all directions have come here, and through the years I have watched them sitting in a circle, waiting to tell us the things which we all wanted to hear — statesmen, churchmen, literary men; among them, as I look back, Bishop Lawrence, Norman Davis, Ralph Adams Cram, Richard H. Dana, Booker T. Washington, various Sedgwicks, our own Mr. Choate, and numerous others.

There, as everywhere, some funny little incident — such as a bench giving way in the audience, an unexpected shower — our good clothes, and nowhere to go; and upon one occasion, which I remember best, the sun, usually behind the cliff, breaking through in the wrong place. The celebrities looked very uncomfortable, holding up their hats, or their hands, or the written speeches, which they were afterwards going to make, to shield their eyes: we in the audience restless and uncomfortable. It was hard to sit still and pretend to be listening with a row of our most distinguished countrymen going blind before our eyes.

Suddenly a little old lady in the front row cut the Gordian knot and came to the rescue. She rose to her feet, holding aloft a tiny beruffled parasol, which even some twenty years ago was old-fashioned. She struggled up across the intervening space between us and the rostrum, tripping over her long skirts, and the uneven ascending ground. Arrived at the stone barricade, she held aloft the dainty little emblem of a bygone femininity. Mr. Choate leaned down and received it as if he were receiving an honor from a sovereign. He turned it about, admired it, and then he and the Bishop, who happened to be next him, cuddled down under it, and smiled pleasantly, like two big happy boys, at their friends left out in the sun.

Then another little old lady — there were always little old ladies in old-fashioned clothes, with parasols, in Stockbridge — a second little old lady became inspired, toddled up, tripping over *her* skirts, and presented *her* little beruffled offering — and then another. And there they sat, the diplomat and the churchman, the man of letters and the scientist, the politician and the professor, all in a row and

all smiling, all with little parasols, black and white and fluffy, above their heads; I admit an occasional umbrella, but the picture is so much better without it! Some of them had fancy handles and one or two a tassel with which we may be sure the diplomat amused himself; and we onlookers, trying to keep our minds upon the dignified address which was being handed out to us.

The Ice Glen Parade, which until very lately was held annually in Stockbridge, was, I think, a unique occasion. It was instituted some sixty or seventy years ago by Miss Fanny Kemble, who lived here at one time, and who presumably brought the idea from some similar fête in England.

The Ice Glen, as it is called, is in reality a ravine of perhaps a mile long through Bear Mountain. It twists and turns, at times high rocky walls appear upon either side, at other times open woody spaces, and comes out upon the hillside a mile from the village.

The 'Parade' took place upon an evening in September, usually about the fourteenth, and preferably upon the full of the moon. It was got up and managed by the Stockbridge people, though the young people came in groups from the neighboring towns. For a great many years Miss Mary Weyman led the procession, and later, several times, my daughter. The young people met in front of the hotel, in costume, of course, the men carrying torches. The costumes must be short and of not too delicate material, suitable for climbing over rocky surfaces, and of late years a prize has been given for the most effective.

From the hotel, at about eight o'clock, they started forward in a procession, eight abreast, up the street, turned

into the open space beside the schoolhouse, up the irregular road through Laurel Hill, and down a winding path across the railroad and trolley tracks into the great ravine. This ravine is supposed to be so dark and cold that even in the heat of summer there is always hidden, in some crevice or corner, a glint of ice.

The day of the 'Parade' the guards had done various things to make the journey less dangerous; cleared away rubbish, cut off hanging branches, and put down planks across the steep places among the rocks. Also in the evening they had gone ahead and placed colored lights, green and red and blue, at various points of vantage, transforming the winding column of brilliant revellers into a gorgeous pageant.

It was a strange, romantic sight, every one in costume, every one singing and laughing, calling back and forth, sometimes a brilliant procession, sometimes a broken group, sometimes a straggler, a red Mephistopheles and a little Dutch girl, scrambling, or possibly loafing, in the rear. On one occasion, a party of Lenox people came dressed as Swiss mountain-climbers; the men in Alpine hats and with pointed staffs; the women in plaid skirts and old daguerreotype jackets, binoculars strung about their hips, and little flat hats with tags of ribbon at the back or over the ear. The group was bound together by a long rope as if for a climb of the Matterhorn, and looked for all the world as if they had stepped out of the pages of a 'Godey's Lady's Book.'

At the far end, where the procession came out upon the hillside, back of Mr. William Clark's Italian villa, it was quite a wonderful sight. I have stood often in the road some quarter of a mile below and watched them, just one

light at the edge of the wood, then another, and then a flitting group, moving, stopping, trailing down across the sloping fields under the stars, until they joined us in the highway below. Here they formed some eight or ten abreast, and zigzagged across the road singing, dancing, with a contingent at the head firing Roman candles as they came.

They always turned in at the Crowninshield driveway, dipped down, past the assembled household upon the porch, and up and out at the farther end, then down the road singing, rollicking, the band playing, the wall of Roman candles ahead, across the bridge, up into the street, and back to the schoolhouse where they had started. There in the open playground was a great pile of boxes, soaked in kerosene — a pile as big, literally, as a house — lighted into a terrific blaze; and here the revellers danced about until the mountain of fire crumbled into a smouldering mass, and the dancers danced off down the street to the Town Hall for continued revelry and the awarding of prizes.

Afterwards, when the trolley cars came through the town, they brought such a variety of sight-seers that the fête, with occasional exceptions, was given up.

During our summers at 'Chesterwood,' Mr. French's greatest amusement was to play at portrait painting. He always hoped for a free summer when he might go off with a painter friend and study, and, with no idea of exhibiting, he painted all the girls who came to visit us. He was quite wonderful at catching a likeness, which showed, of course, his trained hand and eye in another line of work.

Some painters, as we know, care but little for the like-

ness, but Mr. French always claimed that, if the drawing were absolutely correct, the painting must look like the sitter. 'A likeness,' he used to say, 'consists not so much in getting in all the details, as in getting what you do get right. It really does not need very many details to convey an impression of a face or figure. A silhouette is a strong likeness as far as it goes, and it goes pretty far in spite of the fact that there are no eyes, no ears, no modelling of any kind. If the outline is absolutely correct, it looks exactly like the person.'

John Burroughs was brought to us by our friend, Mr. Robert Underwood Johnson. Of course we all knew John Burroughs, and every one who knew him loved him; but I think of him as he sat upon our porch that day where we had our informal supper. Some one offered him a glass of ginger ale instead of tea, which the rest of us were having, and his answer was, 'I'd like the ginger ale if — this being a kind of picnic supper — you will let me drink it my own way, as I do in the woods.'

So a pretty girl handed him a bottle and stood by, waiting with a glass in her hand. Burroughs took the bottle, wrenched off the cap, and all of us watching him, before we realized what he was doing, popped the open neck into his mouth and drank it off, fizz and all, much to our amazement, his own kindly eyes twinkling!

Paul Manship, too, came to visit us at 'Chesterwood.' He had been chosen to go to the Academy in Rome, and wrote to Mr. French that he would like to come to see him in New York, and, as we had already gone to the country, we asked him to come up there for a night. He came, and

seemed to find so much to interest him in the studio and in the country, which was of course very different from that of his home in the West, that we asked him to spend a few days. Mr. French and in fact all of us were busy, and he claimed that he was quite equal to taking care of himself. He was. I felt that he saw every inch of everything that was in the studio, and every tree and shrub and growing thing on the place. I think of him standing in the middle of the lawn, gazing at the view and clouds, at the air itself, breathing it in. It seemed to me, during those days, that, whenever I looked out of the window, I saw this slim, boyish figure standing somewhere, anywhere, breathing in the beauty which he found everywhere, and which I hoped he found more there than in some other places. I always like to think of him with us, alone, with only art and nature about us, before any one else knew him; before, in fact, he really knew himself.

Madame Homer never lived there, but I always associate her with Stockbridge, because it was there that I first knew her. I had remembered her always as did so many of her admirers as 'Orpheus' in the opera of that name, in her boyish drapery and beauty, a green wreath upon her brown hair; but it was lovely to know her in our simple village life as just the radiant, joyous mother and wife and friend. I remember one day on the village street she put her arm through mine, and said, 'Come over to the church with me. I am going to sing there to-morrow morning, if they can find anybody to play for me.' So we went around to the back of the old-fashioned Congregational Church where the young woman who played the organ of a Sunday was waiting with the key. We entered,

Mr. Sidney Homer coming a few minutes later. Mr. Homer and I seated ourselves in the middle of the church, the only audience.

The young woman sat at the small organ, Mrs. Homer mounted the steps beside the pulpit, and, as easily and naturally as an angel, breathed out her big beautiful velvety voice until it filled every corner of the bare empty room. She was as sweet and gentle with the little organist as if the latter were conferring a favor by playing her accompaniments. Now and then as she sang, Mr. Homer would hold up a hand, 'No, that is not right,' he would say; 'that last syllable, hold it, carry it over'; and over and over together they would repeat and repeat, she as an obedient child, he as a devoted teacher.

I, of course, was enthralled to be behind the scenes, to get even a glimpse of their method. I turned to him once:

'It seems so wonderful to hear her in a simple little village church. I wonder what I should think if I had strolled in without knowing anything about it and heard that heavenly voice.'

He looked at me sideways for a moment, then his eyes twinkled. 'I know what you would *say*,' he said. 'You would say, "What a perfectly lovely voice — if it could only be cultivated."'

It was so exactly what I probably should have said, like many of my half-musical friends, that I have been often reminded of it.

Isadora Duncan danced in our garden in the early days when she was just beginning to be known, and at the time in her career when she was most beautiful — young, slim, ethereal, like a Botticelli Muse. She had been dancing

at Mrs. Winthrop's and came over partly because she liked our woods and paths, and partly because she thought Mr. French would make some suggestion as to her gowns, and so on. So we dressed her up in wreaths of flowers and pieces of drapery, and tried all kinds of experiments, and some of her poses were certainly very beautiful. Of course, everything that she did was a pose. She never seemed for a moment entirely natural to us ordinary people, but her poses and her grace were exquisite. As she danced upon the upper terrace of the garden, with her long fragile figure, red poppies in her hair, her fleeting motions, she seemed like a Greek figure come to life. Her dancing at that time was like a breath of nature, but in everyday life, though always graceful and beautiful, every motion was studied, and for years afterwards one of our friends, an artist himself, used to amuse himself by twisting his head or his neck or his toes, suddenly and violently out of place, and 'feeling' like Isadora.

She lived in a dream; a very artistic beautiful dream; and she was apparently conscious of nothing on earth but that dream, which perhaps after all is the best part of creative art.

She and her sister were living in a boarding-house some twelve miles away from us at Monterey, and I remember one evening I had to insist urgently that they go home before the gathering clouds broke into the threatened thunderstorm. They felt no responsibility themselves, but they finally went off in a high buggy like an old chaise, with a big raw-boned horse, the reins hanging loosely in the sister's hands; Isadora, like an early American fashion plate, in a green-flowered muslin gown, a poke bonnet and mitts, waving her hand in a graceful little affected manner.

I was hardly polite, because I was so afraid that the storm would get them and that they would be washed back down the mountain-side into our front yard, from which they were starting. As usual, however, I might as well have saved myself my fears. They were quite unconscious of any danger. It only sprinkled before they reached Monterey, and she wrote me a four-page foolscap letter the next day about how perfect that evening had been, how sparkling the raindrops were, how thrilling the rolling thunder, and 'old Pegasus striking fire with his iron shoes!'

Later, in New York, when she came to see us one afternoon, I remember how very beautiful she looked. She was dressed in a dark blue street gown, a wonderful warm, deep blue, with a big amethyst jewel, little touches of dull heliotrope in hat and gown, and heliotrope tulle about her neck — nothing, of course, to describe, but straight from a Paris *atelier* — not only artistic, but *chic*.

When she left, some of my guests rushed to the window to get a last glimpse of her. She hailed a hansom, and I don't wonder that the man on the box seemed interested at the unusualness of his fare. She was standing upon the running-board, one foot slightly lifted and resting upon the floor, her right hand behind her supporting herself upon the dashboard, her left reaching up and resting lightly upon the roof. Her body was thrown back, her delicate face lifted to the old shabby driver, her seraphic glance shining up at him as if he had been a cherub among the clouds. The little boys were collecting upon the sidewalk, my guests eagerly hanging out of the windows, lost in admiration.

Whatever the conversation between the incongruous pair, Isadora made the most of it. She stood there un-

conscious — aggressively unconscious — her delicate figure swaying slightly, her uplifted face radiant, smiling, nodding, the bewildered coachman almost tumbling out of his perch in his admiration, and then, at just the right moment, slowly, deliberately, she gathered herself together, mounted into the hansom, seated herself, drew the wisps of tulle about her, and, without a glance at her assembled admirers, drove away.

Isadora lived as she danced. Her everyday life, at least as to externals, was to her a beautiful Greek rhythm. Upon one occasion she was to dance at a theatrical benefit. Mr. H——, a friend of ours, had arranged for her part, the sixth number upon the programme, a woodland dance in a sylvan glade, the entrance through a high-arched doorway at the back. As the time for her appearance approached, H——, missing her from the wings, rushed around to her dressing-room and opened the door. There the young Greek goddess, radiant in bare limbs and chiffon draperies, was seated before her dressing-table.

'For God's sake, Isadora,' he cried anxiously, 'you have only five minutes — the stage is set — hurry up!'

But the goddess did not move, she did not even look at him. 'I — can — dance,' she murmured in a voice that seemed to have nothing whatever to do with the occasion.

He hurried to her side, seized her shoulder and shook her slightly. 'Isadora, you ought to be in place now!' Then, impatiently, 'For God's sake——'

At this, without a word, the lovely young creature slid nonchalantly, if gracefully, down upon the floor, spread out her arms upon the seat of the chair, dropped her head upon her arms, and went peacefully to sleep. I would not for a moment imply that Isadora had dined too — copiously,

but it was evident that she had dined, that the room was hot, and that she was in no condition to go upon the stage.

H—— flew out of the room and down the hall, found Emma, the tirewoman, used to all emergencies, and brought her back, a glass of water in one hand, a bottle in the other.

'Here, Madame,' she cried, holding the glass to the lips of the sleeping goddess upon the floor, 'drink this and you'll be all right.'

The figure raised her head and drank the contents. In another moment — and at this stage there were not many moments to spare — Isadora seemed to come to life. A tremor ran through her body, she drew herself together, and with the assistance of her two neighbors, rose slowly to her feet. 'I — can — dance!' she said in an impersonal drawl.

They moved slowly out of the room, along the corridor, and up to the high-arched doorway, looking across the sylvan glade to the audience. For a moment she stood there almost as if poised for flight, the toe of one foot just leaving the ground, the hands slightly reaching forward, the lips parted —— A man's hand, to be sure, grasped one elbow, a woman's long finger prodded the other — but the parted lips breathed ecstatically, 'I — can — dance!'

The audience clapped faintly, tentatively; it was too ethereal for noise.

Suddenly the beautiful figure began to droop, to wilt, and dropped gracefully, rhythmically, into a heap upon the floor. Slowly she lifted her right arm, rested it against the lintel of the door, leaned her cheek caressingly against her arm, and went to sleep.

From the dark amphitheatre of the house came a soft

breathless ripple of applause. At this, the small head lifted, the body swayed, leaned over, rested the left arm against the other lintel of the door, pressed the cheek against that arm, and went to sleep.

Again a soft ripple of applause swept over the house. Back of the great doorway a man's hand upon one side was reaching in with little tentative jerks, 'Isadora!'

Upon the other, a woman's sharp fingers were grasping a near-by shoulder — 'Just another mouthful, you know; it'll help you!'

The little sleeping figure drew herself together, unfolded slowly, and, with unseen hands upon either side supporting her, rose gracefully and leisurely to her feet. Innocent and radiant, she stood before them, the lips parted, the hands reaching out — a burst of music, a step forward — the long swinging limbs, the floating figure, the lights, the ecstasy ——

Isadora had never danced like this, so said the papers. The tirewoman, phlegmatic, 'It always does it!' — Mr. H—— in a state of collapse — terror or joy — he never knew which; and Isadora, ethereal, untouched, the rhythm, the joy, the beauty, for which she lived.

Naturally the most distinguished man of the neighborhood, whom Stockbridge was proud to claim and to honor, was Mr. Joseph H. Choate. I remember him chiefly, those early years of my life there, as he looked riding down the village street on a big bay horse, handsome, distinguished, smiling. I always think of Mr. Choate as radiating happiness, because, I suppose, of that beautiful smile and the twinkle lurking behind it. In the middle of the most serious conversation, you felt that some humorous touch

might leap forth at you at any moment. My little secretary, who at one time worked for Mr. Choate, tells me that sometimes, when they were working upon a case which seemed to her almost hopelessly profound, he would stop her suddenly, hold up a hand, the fun creeping into his eyes, and tell her some funny story, and for the moment they would forget about the law and diplomacy and laugh over it together.

He was very fond of people, especially so, perhaps, in those later years when he had more or less retired from active life, the years during which it was our fortune to know him best. He always talked with people wherever he met them, brilliantly, easily, spontaneously. He liked to go about, but especially he liked to have people in his own home.

I remember being asked to one very small afternoon affair in the early season, when Mrs. Choate laughingly confided to me that she was not ready for a tea, that the house was not settled, that the curtains were not up, but that Mr. Choate could not possibly wait: that there was some one there from China whom they must entertain, and also that he wanted to see his friends and neighbors early in the summer.

I think he would have liked to have a 'day at home,' and sometimes claimed that the family would not let him, though I imagine he realized well enough that the great number of people who would come from all over the countryside would be something of a strain upon both Mrs. Choate and himself.

One late afternoon, when Mr. French and I were having tea with them on the terrace of their house, Mr. French remarked, apropos of the exaggerated social columns with

which the newspapers tried to make our rather quiet neighborhood a fashionable resort, 'I saw in the paper, a few days ago, that Mrs. Choate had just given a large reception.'

'Really?' said Mr. Choate in a surprised tone. He leaned forward as if he were considering the subject deeply, then he sank back rather limply in his chair. 'There,' he said, in a tone slightly injured, 'I have been waiting to have a tea all summer, and now Carrie has gone and had one without my knowing anything about it.'

Once, when we came out of the village church — it had not been a religious service — possibly something to do with the war — we stood talking with them in a group at the carriage door. Suddenly Mr. Choate looked down at Mr. French's shoes and began to laugh with a laugh that was almost a chuckle.

'There,' he exclaimed, turning to his wife, 'didn't I tell you so? I knew French would wear brown shoes.' Then, to me, 'My whole family fought with me, wanted me to change my shoes, were mad because I was firm and wouldn't do it. I told them that French would wear brown shoes. I was sure of it.'

This, of course, was absurd. Mr. French seldom went to anything in the village, and I am quite sure that Mr. Choate had never before noticed his shoes, but it made us all laugh, especially Mrs. Choate, which he loved, of all things, to do.

He always made fun of every one — I mean of his intimate friends in the audience — whenever he made an address, and the people made fun of enjoyed it and laughed with the rest.

I was in the habit of staying at home on Friday after-

noons, because I lived so far out in the country that it was the only way I could see my friends. Mr. Choate came very often and never missed a chance of any small joke that he could nail onto my innocent little teas. He used to say: 'Let me see! How many visitors did you have yesterday? Only about twelve? You're falling off — falling off! I'm glad I wasn't there. I like a party.' At another time he would remark: 'I saw you had a great occasion last Friday. All the élite of the Berkshires flocking over there. I had to be in New York. Too bad, wasn't it?'

One very cold day in October, he came over. There had been various people earlier in the afternoon who had gone home. When he came in, another gentleman with him, seeing three or four of the family sitting about having tea, he said: 'Why! Why, is *this* the reception I brought my friend M—— to? A foreign ambassador, I'm afraid he'll think he's come under false pretenses. I told him that there would be at *least* seventy-five people — and nobody but Mrs. French, and Margaret, and Clara Morse. Well, well, M——, we will have to make the best of it.' And his eyes twinkled as they always did when he had a joke on somebody.

As he grew older and went out less into the big world, he used to say that Mrs. Crowninshield's Thursdays and Mrs. French's Fridays saved his life.

During that critical week in 1917, when the English Commission came over and urged our help in the war, Mr. Choate was, naturally, very much to the front. Day after day, wherever the distinguished visitors went, Mr. Choate seemed to be always with them doing his share — he was eighty years old — and we began to wonder how he could stand it. It was probably the great dinner given in honor

of the foreign guests at which he presided that used up his strength more than anything else.

One day Mr. French came home, and in his account of the services at the Columbia Library, said, 'It really scared me to see Mr. Choate climbing that tremendous flight of steps. He didn't seem to mind it, but every one else was anxious about him.' I think it was the very next morning that, when the paper arrived, there, in large letters, was the announcement of his death. My first thought was, 'Poor Mrs. Choate!' and my second, 'What a glorious way to go!'

I heard, afterward, a little story of one of those evenings when the Commission had been dining with him. After dinner, they went into the front room and sat in a group before the fire. Mr. Choate said: 'I have a proposition to make while we are sitting here. I should like to choose the subject, and my suggestion is that we discuss the immortality of the soul.'

So those men, all of them very distinguished, put aside the war and the subjects which had been uppermost in their minds, and sat there and discussed 'the immortality of the soul.'

It was during the last years of the war that Mr. French made, or at least finished, the seated statue of Lincoln for the Memorial in Washington. His friend, and for years his collaborator, Henry Bacon, had been appointed the architect to design and build the Memorial, and he immediately engaged Mr. French to make the statue for which his beautiful building was to be the shrine. This was in 1915, but it was not till 1920 that it was finished and erected.

Few people understand the hazards, aside from the labor,

THE STATUE OF LINCOLN IN PROCESS OF ERECTION IN THE MEMORIAL AT WASHINGTON

of cutting a statue in stone. The finest marble still comes from the ancient quarries in Italy — Carrara and Serravezza; but however carefully selected, a dark spot or defect of some sort may develop, necessitating the choosing of another block and beginning all over again. An excellent white marble from Georgia was chosen as being particularly well adapted to the execution of so large a figure as the Lincoln.

The popular idea that a sculptor rises from his couch at midnight, seizes his mallet and chisel, and, in a fine frenzy, hews out a beautiful statue before morning, exists only in poetry. Sculpture is a much more serious business than that. Occasionally a sculptor, when the spirit moves him, himself cuts a head or a torso out of the marble without a model or previous study, but usually the sculptor's model is copied by a marble-cutter and finished by the artist. There is evidence to prove that the old-time sculptor proceeded in much the same way as do the sculptors of the present day.

In order to determine how large the statue should be, a temporary plaster model of the Lincoln was made about twelve feet in height and erected in place in the Memorial. This proved much too small, and two solar prints were made, one eighteen feet in height, the other twenty feet, and put in place. Cut out from the background, they looked strangely like the real thing, and, as a consequence of these experiments, the statue was eventually made twenty feet in height instead of twelve as was originally planned. Mr. French and Mr. Bacon, our daughter, and Evelyn Longman, who did much of the decorative work in the Memorial, went down to Washington to try the experiments.

Piccirilli Brothers were awarded the contract to cut the

Lincoln in marble from the plaster model. The great size — it is, I believe, the largest marble statue in existence — made it necessary to build it up from twenty pieces of stone. It is a proof of the accuracy with which the copying is done that, although the pieces were cut separately and were not assembled until put together on the pedestal in the Memorial, they fitted as perfectly as if carved from one block and sawn apart.

Mr. Bacon and the young architects in his office worked for some ten years upon the plans — once given the order it became the absorbing object, the inspiration of his life. He took but small interest in other work, his whole mind seeming to concentrate upon the gradual evolving of this monument, as well as to the idea of abstract beauty for which it stands.

A year after its completion he died at the age of fifty-eight. His friend Dan French said of him, at the time, that it seemed as if Bacon had been created for the sole purpose of making the Lincoln Memorial; that he had achieved a reputation for monumental work when the commission was given him; that after its achievement it would have been difficult for him to go back to more commonplace work; that, his great work finished, it seemed almost part of the scheme that he should pass on.

Great honor was conferred upon him. The greatest of these, and indeed the greatest ever conferred upon an architect in America, was when the Institute of Architects presented its medal to him at a dinner which concluded the Annual Meeting of the Institute in Washington, May 18, 1923. Owing to a passing indisposition Mr. French was unable to be present.

The dinner, attended by five hundred members and

guests, was held in a great marquee at the east end of the Lagoon in front of the Lincoln Memorial, and at its close there was a beautiful pageant. Bacon, attended by the President of the Institute, guests of honor, and special guests, embarked upon a barge in the Lagoon and this, escorted by the members in costume upon either bank, was rowed down to the steps of the Memorial, which was effectively illuminated for the occasion. Here President Harding awaited them, and, introduced by Chief Justice Taft, the Permanent Chairman of the Lincoln Memorial Commission, he presented to Henry Bacon, with an appropriate address, the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects — 'the highest honor within its power to give.' Mr. Cortissoz referred to Henry Bacon as 'an embodied conscience.'

When the Monument was finished and the statue put in place, it was found that the lighting was so bad that for those first few years it was a constant grief to the sculptor and his artist friends. If Mr. Bacon had lived, this could, of course, have been corrected, but, with the architect of the building gone, it became a serious problem.

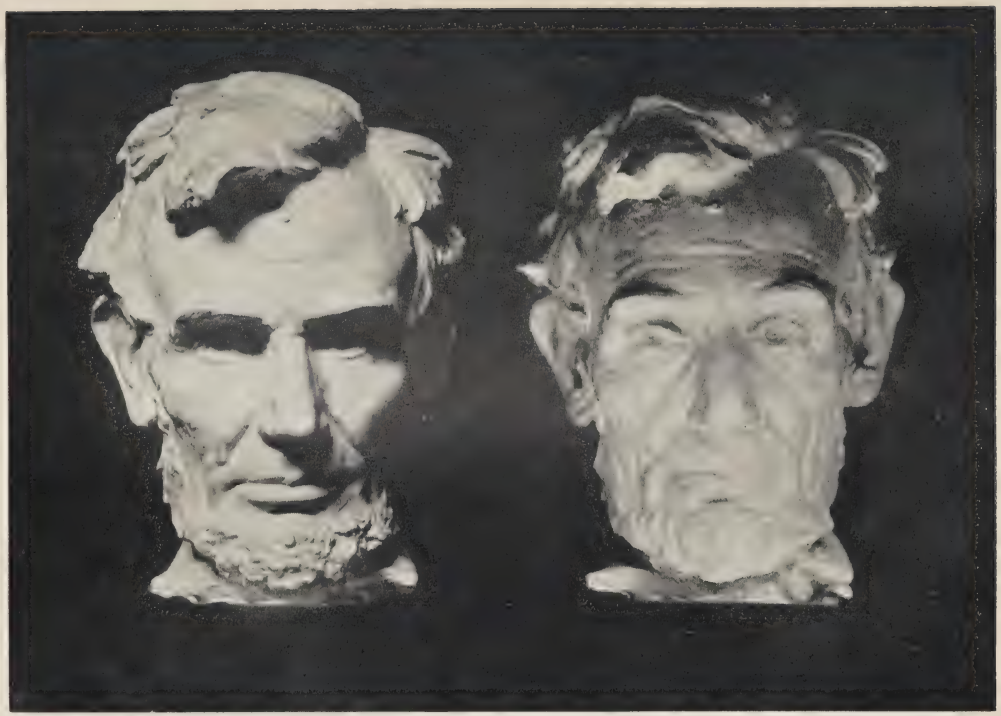
As at first designed, the whole ceiling was of glass, the light coming from above, as it should to light the statue properly. During the process of building, the scheme was changed and a slightly colored marble was used in place of the glass. This gave a beautiful soft glow to the interior of the great room, but, alas! it, in conjunction with the hard light coming from the blue sky in front, was fatal to the face. At certain times of the day it was well enough, but at other times the effect was distressing. It made the face lined and haggard, and the knees unduly prominent. I think at the time, Mr. French was so discouraged about it,

and for a while so hopeless of any solution of the problem, that he felt that it could never look as it was intended to look.

Nothing could be done, of course, without the Government's sanction and an appropriation from Congress, and such processes, as we all know, are likely to be tedious. However, things did straighten out in an unexpectedly successful manner. Mr. Cannon, a great friend and admirer of Mr. Bacon, bestirred himself, as did Mr. Bush-Brown, the sculptor, General Sherrill, and later his successor, Colonel Ulysses S. Grant, 3d. Congress appropriated the money — we heard it said afterwards that the name of Lincoln was an open sesame, that in Congress as elsewhere, whenever Lincoln was mentioned, money flowed in — and, after months and indeed years of experimenting, a system of artificial lighting was installed which has made it quite as successful as it could be under the best circumstances.

It is always difficult for laymen to understand the importance of the lighting of a statue, while the sculptor knows that the lighting is, after all, about all there is to it. In a painting, there is always some glint of color, and there are at least no projections to throw fierce shadows, while in a modelled head, save for the proper lighting, there is simply the nose standing out into space, a few lumps by way of cheek-bones, eyebrows, a lock of hair upon the forehead, to catch the light and throw deep smooches.

For years, Mr. French has mildly quarrelled with some of his dearest friends among the painters, as to the placing of sculpture in the exhibitions. The painters do not, quite naturally, want a big white bust close to their pastel moonlight scenes, and so they are inclined to place them upon radiators, and in obscure corners, and let them go at that.



TWO PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE HEAD OF THE LINCOLN STATUE IN WASHINGTON
Showing the different effects of lighting on sculpture

During the struggle with this problem about the lighting of the Lincoln, he had two pictures taken of the big statue in Washington, which have turned out to be valuable as well as interesting. He and his photographer took, first, a photograph of the seated figure as it stands in his studio at 'Chesterwood,' the light coming from above, a perfect light, the one in which it was made; then they pulled the statue around into the worst light they could find, the rays coming criss-cross from different angles. The two pictures I give — the first as if a beautiful woman were photographed in evening clothes, with all the accessories of studio lights, etc.; the second, the same woman as if a flash-light had been suddenly turned upon her face.

Having the kind of mind which seems to retain anecdotes about all kinds of subjects, I am reminded of a little story which I think would appeal to any lover of children.

A prominent lady of Washington wrote Mr. French that she had taken her little boy of five years to see the Lincoln. When they entered the great interior, he stood quietly by her side, so quietly that she forgot that he was there. Suddenly he pulled her skirts and said in a loud whisper, 'Mother, shall I take off my hat?' She agreed that being of the genus man, even though in such an embryonic quantity, it would be the proper thing to do. Later, as he seemed to be in a very quiet mood, she let him wander around by himself, while she looked at the statue, the frescoes, the beautiful outlook between the columns.

Suddenly she noticed that he had climbed upon the lower step of the pedestal and was reaching up and patting the marble flank of the statue, with his small hands. She went over to him and lifted him down and mildly reproved him,

'You must be very quiet in here,' she said, 'and not do anything that could seem disrespectful.'

He looked slightly crestfallen for a moment and then said, half apologetically, 'I was only going to climb up in his lap, Mother, he looked so lonely!'

CHAPTER XV

TAORMINA: A MEDIÆVAL WEDDING

Upon a semicircular curve of rock, midway between the sea and sky, hangs the old Greek town of Taormina. For a mile or more it runs along the face of the cliff, like a narrow mantelpiece, the Catania Gate at one end, the Messina Gate at the other; the little streets to the right straggling up the hillside; those to the left meandering down among the gulches below, a nest for an eagle, an abode for a bandit, rather than a habitation for modern man. Yet it has hung there for two thousand years, gripping the wall of cliff, fighting off invaders, above even the mighty forces of Nature, the earthquakes and eruptions which have devastated the country below.

Back of the street and towering above it are two great pointed peaks, upon the summit of one the tiny Greek town of Mola, upon the other an old Sekelian castle, ruined and ragged, flaunting its history to the sky.

In front of this great amphitheatre of a view, facing the town, curving into the rocky coast, stretching off to the very limits of vision, lies the ocean, calm, unbroken, where almost no ship comes in the winter, the great lonely Ionian Sea.

And off to the right, with wild fields and hills and gorges between, above the town, above the sea, above all life and sustenance of life, lies Ætna. For the volcano towers above the island, not like Stromboli, fierce and rebellious upon its isolated rock, but swinging up in long, graceful lines ten thousand feet, almost, from the plains below, gentle, bene-

ficent, like the limbs of a sleeping woman, silent, glistening, its very crater stilled by the distance into a lonely thread of smoke, like a mighty shrine where the gods themselves must have worshipped in the early days of the world.

The little towns cluster about its base, reaching up to it, basking in its smile, one of them swallowed up now and again, to be sure — five cities, I believe, buried beneath shabby old Catania upon the water's edge, one of them with an amphitheatre somewhere within its depths, second only in size to the one in ancient Rome.

Taormina, they tell you, is safe — so far — and also Randazzo — especially Randazzo! In this most entrancing town among the hills, the most mediæval, it is said, in all Sicily, they will explain to you that Randazzo is quite safe — because of the great faith of its people. This has been proved many times. When the mountain has sent a seething torrent down its sloping flanks, down almost to the city's edge, so that, the guide-book tells you, you can feel the stifling air upon your face, the people of Randazzo have gone forth with their sacred relics, have stood in their windows or in the open doorways of their churches and offered up prayers, and, behold! the mighty mass of destruction, creeping upon them, ominous, inevitable, has turned suddenly, silently, without apparent cause — save possibly a chasm of two or three thousand feet — and gone its way down to the sea.

Every one talks about Ætna just as in Japan every one talks about Fuji-yama, native and stranger alike. The conversation at breakfast in the dining-room of our little 'Diodoro' was usually about the sacred mountain — when it was not about the more or less sacred bath.

'Who saw Ætna this morning?' some one would ask at breakfast of a friend the length of the small dining-room.

'I did.'

'When?'

'Oh! about six.'

'That wasn't early enough. I was out there at five, new crater over to the left — color enough to set the world on fire.'

For there it lay, always before us, the delectable mountain, in the sun of our admiration, sometimes glittering cold against the blue, sometimes veiled in wisps of pink and silver, and drifting mauve, its thread of incense curling up, or perhaps a new and tiny crater seeping through the icy surface to live for a day and die upon the morrow. How could one watch it early and late and worship at it, and not talk about it!

But quite often it was the daily ablution, rather than the volcano, that we talked about, for that, too, was a burning subject to us Americans, brought up to a bathroom apiece and one or two over by way of good measure. There were difficulties to overcome, and every one was interested in a common cause.

'You didn't really take a bath in that refrigerator!' This usually to a Britisher newly arrived. 'How could you?'

'And you know you *can* get perfectly clean,' explains a young woman to a newcomer — across the table, or possibly in her enthusiasm, across the breakfast-room. 'I just lather myself all over with soap — and hot water — and splash myself with cold water ——' She stops, suddenly, a startled interest in this vivid picture of herself upon the faces at the tables about her.

We first thought of going to Taormina the winter after the Armistice, partly to get away from everything we had ever known or heard of before, and partly to economize. My husband thought there was scant economy in taking him away from his work for six months, but I knew well enough that board at a dollar and a half a day and laundry at fifty cents a week would, to a housekeeper who had lived through the soaring prices of the war, be something — a mental economy, to say the least — that was worth trying.

Our friend, Mr. de Bruce, who was present, suggested: 'Oh, if you want to economize, don't go to Taormina, go to Mallorca. It's a heavenly spot, and I know a man who lived there in a villa with towers and terraces, and all kinds of attractive things, and he paid only sixty dollars a month, and the natives said he was cheated because he was an American; that he should have paid only thirty-five.'

However, we went to Taormina, and no one ever regrets going to Taormina. People tell of other enchanting spots, quite as beautiful, possibly more so — Rapallo, for instance, or Mallorca of the magnificent roads, the wonderful views; and then they admit, 'Of course there isn't any mountain.' The mountain! Ah! but that is the whole point of the story. It is the mountain, the shrine, with its incense curling up telling the secrets of the ages, to which all the longings, the mysteries of our natures cry out. The rest is a setting, the winding road, the decaying cities, the lonely, lonely sea, the worshipping hills, leading up to this brooding magnificence in the sky.

It was because the other hotels were full that we stayed at the tiny Diodoro, hardly more than a *pension*, slightly below the road, the long doors opposite the entrance, all opening out upon the terrace, the terraced garden below

dropping down, down, down to the sea, the long windows of the second floor giving upon balconies, and looking off into all the kingdoms of Sicily.

That first day of our arrival, we went down to the town, along a narrow, irregular road, part of the time between muddy walls, among small houses and low rooms, some of them hardly more than holes in the walls, twisting and turning here and there, up a few steps, into the Corso. We walked along, five of us abreast, our daughter and Mr. Cresson, whose engagement had just been announced upon leaving America, Mrs. Duryea, who was travelling with us, Mr. French, and myself.

This particular Corso in Taormina is a wonderful spot, the centre, the heart of the town — while you are there, of the universe — the market-place among the hills, the forum where every one walks, every one talks, where you meet your friends, where invitations are given and accepted, and — very rarely — declined.

'Did you ask So-and-So to luncheon?'

'No, I did not see him. He wasn't on the Corso. I don't know where he could have been.'

There were no telephones, no motors, save the few at the hotels, which you hired, if you were rich enough, for fifty dollars a day. If you invited any one at all, you invited them upon the street. It was a narrow street, a flat, worn, paved roadway, spreading out slightly in front of the church, a high parapet looking off to the view, and then, along the still winding thoroughfare, the tiny shops, antiques — laces, antiques — embroideries, antiques — and still antiques — you can hardly buy a spool of thread in Taormina — funny little holes in the wall where food is sold, bowls of dried beans, and berries and lentils, strings

of onions and peppers, and mean-looking diminutive figs, a few piles of unfamiliar green things — and the inhabitants, clustered like the figs and the lentils, about the doors.

These dear Sicilians, who never do anything in the house that can possibly be done in the street; indeed, sometimes, like the Litany, things are done in the street that would be better left undone.

The day of our arrival, as we strolled along the Corso, as we all stroll in these isolated countries, forgetting everything we have so cheerfully left at home — just meandering, drinking it in, the leisure, a very abandonment of leisure; with nothing to do that one has ever done before; with no one to see that one has ever even heard of, I, who seem to have a faculty for seeing things and remembering people, beheld, coming towards us with our own blissfully idle swagger, swinging his cane and gazing aimlessly upon nothing at all, a young man about whose face and figure there was something startlingly familiar. He was a very dapper young man, in brown knickers, and his soft brown hat, with the tiny pin-feather which bespeaks anywhere the tourist, entirely different from any one we had so far seen on the Island.

As he came nearer, our eyes met — that is, his eyes met mine — and for some reason they continued to meet; they held, they clung, our heads swung around slowly as if upon pivots, our bodies still going forward, until the rest of the party, thinking I had gone crazy, came to my rescue.

He was an old friend from America, and we were all as glad to see each other as are the usual wanderers who go off into the far corners of the earth in search of rest and solitude.

And after that we kept meeting people — everybody

seemed to turn up in Taormina — the floating, drifting, picturesque society of a shelf-of-a-town, so far away, so up in the clouds, so dramatic a spot that your friends drift in during the short winter months, and a few people, with a great love of art and a great lack of money, live there all the year round.

And the bandits! We began to hear about the bandits before we left New York. It was just before Mussolini and the Fascists had appeared upon the horizon, and there were great disturbances in Italy, but when we reached Taormina it was peaceful enough.

The bandits Sicily has always with her, the Mafia is always rampant, but they keep it pretty much to themselves. To an outsider, I think it is rather more dangerous in New York than in its native land.

These first weeks seemed almost unreal in the beauty amid which we lived — the clean-cut sunshine, the white brooding mountain, the prehistoric views. We tramped among the hills looking for bandits, we climbed up one sugar-loaf mountain to the old Sicilian castle and the other sugar-loaf to the little town of Mola, sprouting out of its peak of rock. A wonderful old walled town is Mola, a tiny Greek city upon one of the mountain peaks back of Taormina, wonderful to read about, romantic to gaze upon, a thrilling climb up to the old stairway hugging the great point of rock upon which it stands.

This stairway is one of the joys of Taormina, a narrow road cut out of the face of the rock, at one side a low railing with the universe beyond; at the other side, the towering projecting cliff. It clings in so close under the precipice, it

is so a part of the mountain, indeed of the foundations of the world, that you know it leads up to a realm half human, half mystic — you expect to see Brunhilda or Lohengrin with trumpets and banners, and — you see only a little patient donkey with its mountain of brush, jerking itself up or down, not even knowing that it has missed its part in the romance of the world.

At the top is a high stone arch or gateway, opening, of course, into the esplanade, a low wall around two sides, stone benches, and looking off — suddenly and violently looking off — over the hills and the town below, the sea — and the universe! Old peasants are sitting about upon the cold seats and the cold parapets, and the place is full of dirty children and pigs.

Back of the esplanade, upon two sides and away from the view, is the town, and what a town! It has stood there for three thousand years, more or less, and it looks it! I have read of a few points of interest in the guide-books, perhaps they read better than they look — or smell; little cellar-like houses, moss-grown streets, with the saving grace of a glint now and then of the sky, as clear and blue as in days when old Dionysius besieged this impregnable rock, toppled over its walls, and was killed for his pains.

Some one has justly called it 'a city of views, of pigs, and of smells.'

And then the wedding! Not chronologically, of course, for that had taken place upon the tenth of January, before we had become so intimate with the life in Sicily, the hill towns, and the bandits. The wedding was, naturally, the great event of our winter. In one way, so far as Taormina was concerned, it was an accident. We were there and it

just happened, and for that reason it was so unusual, so spontaneous, that at the risk of being accused of lack of reserve, of lack of delicacy — which in other people's memoirs I especially dislike — I feel that a mediæval wedding, upon the edge of a volcano, in this unromantic year of 1921, is almost too good to keep to one's self.

We have all read about people being married up in airplanes, and down in coal mines, and, for all I know, by the benefit of radio, but the one thing which saved *our* wedding from the ignominy of a connubial trick was the fact that we were at that time living in Sicily, and that the picturesque things which happened to us were the everyday events of our picturesque lives.

There had never before been an English-speaking wedding in Taormina, but of this we were at the time unaware. In fact, we did not know, until later, that there was to be a wedding at all. We just thought that two people would go over to the Santa Caterina and be married very quietly, which is an entirely different affair from a wedding, from the New York point of view.

When we had left America in the fall of 1920, there was a vague idea that the marriage might take place in Rome, where we had friends. Our daughter, naturally forehanded, took with her her mother's wedding gown. In Palermo, again forehanded, she had bought some cream-colored silk net by way of a veil, and in Taormina we had found — the only thing in the way of antiques that we ever saw during the whole winter bearing the slightest relation to a trousseau — some twenty yards of fine old Cluny lace, which went a long way toward the making of a bride — not so far, I admit, as it could be stretched at the present moment

— when all that are needed are a few wisps of chiffon, a jewel, and — legs!

After we had been there a week or two, the engaged couple came home one Sunday morning from service in Santa Caterina over the way, and announced that they were going to be married, very soon, perhaps, in the chapel of the monastery. They were sure that Miss Hill, who owned it, and whom we already knew, would let them have it for the occasion. They wouldn't have a real wedding, of course. They would just go over some morning and be married.

The idea rather appealed to me, as letting us out of the difficulties of a function in Rome in a borrowed palace and all the complications of foreign ceremonies and a foreign tongue. I had in mind another very lovely wedding in the family connection in America, with special trains, hundreds of motors, twelve ushers, ten bridesmaids, flower girls and pages, the bride in a collapse beforehand, and the whole family in a state of nervous prostration forever afterwards. Really nature is all wrong! Mothers should be born younger than their daughters if they are expected to keep up with them.

Of course all human plans are subject to change, but you can't change your responsibilities much in a little Sicilian town upon a cliff, with nothing but beauty to look at or think about. What little alteration there was to be done to the dress was done by a nondescript young woman who did everything for everybody: who rubbed people's backs when they had lumbago, who washed people's hair when they needed it, or who sewed old lace casually up and down the front of wedding gowns and veils, which in our case made the bridal robe so much more appropriate

ANGEL FOR WHICH MARGARET FRENCH POSED

than if she had known anything at all about fashions or style.

But whatever we lacked as to clothes, we more than made up as to atmosphere, for old Santa Caterina is a wonderful spot, a twelfth-century monastery, six hundred feet up in the air, in the midst of walls and beautiful grounds.

But I wish to announce, here and now, that, as there had never before been a wedding within its walls, so there can never be another. It was sold a few weeks later to the White Sisters and must be devoted for the future to contemplation and prayer.

The monastery had been bought and furnished with old Italian things some years before by an Englishwoman, Lady Hill, who with her family had lived there until her death; her daughter, Miss Hill, still lived in an attractive villa just across the road. From the first we had been thrilled by it, the stately iron gates facing from a distance the white volcano, the long row of honeycomb Saracen tombs flanking its outer wall; the road, of which we could catch a glimpse, winding up from the gate to the beautiful old façade of the Monastery.

The cortile was in the centre of the building, with its fountain and hanging vines. Upon one side stood a small chapel, at that time being used as an English church, upon the other, the rather magnificent refectory, sixty-three by thirty-three feet, with a timbered ceiling and a tiled floor; a splendid renaissance doorway at one end; at the other, an old fresco of Leonardo da Vinci's 'Last Supper.' It is the only monastery which I ever wanted to sit right down and live in. I still think of a little French morning-room up three steps at the end of a long corridor of bedrooms, the

small iron balcony opening out upon a bluff of rocks and greenery, many feet above the entrance door.

A few days later, our daughter announced that they thought they would be married very soon.

'We can have the monastery and do anything we want to, but we think we won't have just a family wedding, because if you and Papa and Nina [Mrs. Duryea] are the only ones, and so far from home, you'll all cry, and we don't want a "cryey" wedding. As we have no old friends, we must invite some of those nice English and American people here at the hotel. *They* won't take it too seriously.'

So we invited first a group of American girls who sat at the table upon one side, and an English family who sat at a table upon the other side, telling them that it was to be a very quiet affair, that we were asking only our oldest and dearest friends — of three weeks.

It is really amusing how people go off into the most distant corners of the earth in search of rest and quiet, and how excited they get at the first sign of anything happening. We found in about two days that every one in town knew about it and was planning on coming to it, thinking naturally that it would be a church ceremony only, and therefore public, as, in fact, we at first thought ourselves. But as we saw how interested people were, we were flattered and began to feel important, and, incidentally, to invite the world — of Taormina.

Also, the Sindaco, or Mayor, Atenasio, told our daughter that he would do everything in his power — which meant everything in Taormina — to make it a success; that, instead of going to his office for the civil ceremony, as was customary, he would hold it in the refectory of the monas-

tery, so that in case of bad weather we should be under one roof.

Every one who stays in Taormina knows every one else, and there were a number of people from both England and America in the diplomatic service wandering about on leave, and gradually the number grew until we had engaged about fifty people for the 'sit-down' luncheon.

'No, it would not be advisable to have a ham,' said our hotel proprietor, who was a gentleman and an American. 'It was very hard to get ham, and, by the time you got it, it wouldn't be safe to eat it. Y-e-s, lettuce; they would be very careful about washing it. Yes, we could have salad and crêpe, the tiny little shrimps, a great delicacy during the season, provided the weather was pleasant, and the men could go out in the boats and catch them.'

I thought at first that I would ask some friends who were coming from Italy to bring down the wedding cake, but I thought better of it. Travelling in Sicily is none too comfortable, and such a big round box would be difficult to throw in and out of car windows, and to sit upon where there was but little space, and, later, my forbearance was rewarded when I saw the table set for the banquet.

Then our friends in Rome wrote that they would come for the event. Mr. Robert Underwood Johnson (who was at that time Ambassador), Mrs. Johnson, and their granddaughter, Olivia; also Mr. Cresson's friend, Mr. Frank Gunther, Chancellor at the Embassy, who would come with his wife and be best man.

Of course there were no cares, no responsibilities, no notes to write, nothing to buy, a full-fledged picturesque wedding with nothing to do about it, except to enjoy one's self. Could any bride be more blessed!

The whole town turned out. The Embassy were met down at Giadini by the gendarmes, who, with guns over their shoulders, escorted them up the six miles of roadway to the Castellamare Hotel where they were to stay. The American flag was hung out above the hotel beside the Italian, and there, together, they floated for days. We, too, had stopped at the Castellamare for the first week of our arrival, unnoticed and obscure, but, upon the arrival of the Embassy, our status was immediately changed. We were hardly allowed to walk upon the street without being bowed and salaamed to.

The day of the wedding was a perfect day, a crystal blue above, an iridescent sea below, nothing but sea and sky and the towering mountain of snow, and floating clouds of blossoms down the hillsides. Every one sent us flowers, small clothes-baskets dripping with roses — and our friends, the American girls, helped Mr. French decorate the church.

I remember that an hour, perhaps, before the ceremony, the bride, who had nothing to do, standing out upon the balcony of her room, with her pink kimono, gathered up, filled with great bunches of violets, dropped them down upon her friends upon the terrace beneath. Every one was out on the terrace, or upon her own particular balcony in the intervals of dressing, laughing, joking, offering advice. It was a gala occasion, a 'festa.' For the moment, we were all Sicilians: some one was going to be married, and there were no responsibilities, just shining spring-time, and blossoms, and joy.

There had been preparations, as we discovered later, but they were not of our doing. Our friend, Mr. Foster, for instance, rushed out upon the terrace and announced breath-

lessly, 'The street has been swept — first time in a thousand years!'

There had been a bachelor dinner the night before with the nice rector of the English church, who was to officiate the next day, the bride's father, the Ambassador, the best man, and a stray friend and traveller, all, except the minister, Americans, and thrilled at this little touch of America in a foreign land.

And there were funny complications such as naturally went with marrying in an isolated island, where nobody knew anything, and nobody could find out anything. The bridesmaid, finding herself so unexpectedly a bridesmaid, was to wear a picture hat which the bride had kept stored away in her trunk, because so far there had been no occasion great enough upon which to try it.

And the Ambassador, on his way home from the bachelor dinner, had cleverly wrenched open a big iron gate, supposedly the entrance to the hotel, and had found himself ensconced in the chicken yard — which, after the confiding manner of Sicily, was unsuspectingly near the entrance — and had great difficulty in wrenching it open from the inside, in order to escape; also in convincing his friends — though we refrained from circulating the story at the time — that there had been at the supper only the most innocuous of the amber wines of the country.

When we left the house, there was one motor for the bride and groom and bridesmaid. The rest of us followed leisurely on foot, a stone's throw up to the monastery, laughing and exchanging greetings with every one, friends and strangers alike, some of whom walked a few steps with us, took our photographs, and made us feel in general like a festival.

At the gateway facing the mountain stood, rigid against the gateposts, two carabinieri, the famous military police of Italy. They stood like statues in their gorgeous uniforms, cocked hats, and gay red pompons. Back of them the bandmaster, with his white cock plumes, and his band of thirty pieces, among the trees inside. A little to one side, playing his pipe, was the old piper to whom we had listened and talked, and, be it said softly, had liberally tipped, whenever we had met him seated upon a wall or rambling upon a hillside. He had brought a little reed pipe, carved with her name, for the bride, and was playing, of all things, the 'Pastorale,' because he knew that she loved it, that most wonderful shepherd song which, if you live in Taormina, and become intimate with its hills, you hear constantly, though I remember we were there some weeks before we ever heard it at all.

I know that it is called the 'Pastorale of Gesù Bambino,' and I had heard that it was like the coming of angel hosts — on Christmas Eve under the starlight in the square before the cathedral, the touching little procession, the child angels, the Bambino lifted on high before the great blazing pinwheels . . .

'Why the pinwheels?' we asked.

'Oh, the pinwheels,' was the answer, 'are to attract the attention of the Lord down upon the Holy Infant.'

In such a scene it would be easy to call it religion, but in those southern, primitive countries, the religion, the folklore, the passions of pastoral life, are hopelessly mixed. It is a wordless folk-song of the Taormina hills, transmitted orally from generation to generation. There is much more in it than can be put into words. It is more than the wise men of old coming to greet their Lord; it is

the peasants, the shepherds of the hillsides, breaking forth into the joy of sunlight and life.

There is no other song, or rather air, just like it in the world. It has all the wildness, the abandon of the French 'Carmagnole,' with none of the 'Carmagnole's' urban despair. It is of the mountains, tender, illusive, joyous. It is the tinkling of the bells upon the hillsides, the call of the flute in the upper spaces, the breath of the flowers, the glow of the sunshine, the abandon, the love, the passions of primitive nature, frozen into song and music in the making of the world.

Later, when we paused in front of the beautiful façade, the great brass-studded door was closed. There was no bell; we were apparently not expected. But we were Sicilians for the day, and nobody minds in Sicily, so we waited and talked and laughed, the whole bridal party, and presently, true to form, an old woman, with a shawl over her head and a child by her side, came peeping around a distant corner.

'Un minuto, signori, un minuto.' Then they disappeared, and a moment later the great door was opened with profound apologies — greetings.

Of course this greatly troubled dear Miss Hill, who had done so much to make everything possible and beautiful, but we loved it. It was so much more Sicilian than to have the doors thrown open by stately flunkies, and no one, not even the Ambassador or the carabinieri, or the band, or even the bride, was on this day in the least hurried.

We gathered in the great refectory to the left of the cortile. Many of the guests had joined us or arrived with us, and we all sat about, somewhat informally, upon the

arms of chairs — for the beautiful old room was full of Italian furniture — and welcomed our friends. I am sure that no one enjoyed it more than did the bride.

Back of the long table, against the Renaissance door, stood the Sindaco in his green-and-gold sash, with one or two aides beside him, the four carabinieri, and the bandmaster, who appeared for some reason to be an important part of the marriage service. The bride and groom stood facing them.

After the civil ceremony, the Sindaco presented the bride with the tortoise-shell pen, with which they had signed the marriage certificate, in a white satin box. Then we all went out, across the cortile, and up the steps into the chapel. Some of us, the first to arrive, stood and watched the rest of the procession. The lovely young bridesmaid, her arms full of roses, the little white figure of the bride in her long white satin gown, in her hand a red morocco prayer-book, the great pomponed carabinieri back of her, the fountain playing, the sun shining, the walls and columns all dripping with vines. Then up the steps into the chapel, the four carabinieri — and the bandmaster — standing at attention at the door, and later, when she came back from the altar, falling into line, and following her back into the refectory.

Some one said to me, 'Where on earth did she get that dress? It looks as if it came out of a chest.' And I realized how the long lines of my old satin, of no particular style or period, fitted into its surroundings — as no court train and short skirt could have done.

By a curious combination of family happenings, our daughter was married with six wedding rings. It is a long story, but for various reasons the wedding rings of the

THE WEDDING PARTY IN THE ROSE GARDEN
In the center: The Sindaco, Ambassador Johnson, the bride and groom and Mr. French

family had been saved, making a broad band of tiny gold threads held together with a crosswise band, the oldest, the bride's great-great-great-grandmother with its inscription of 'gratitude' singularly appropriate to the mediæval atmosphere of the place.

Back in the refectory we sat down to a luncheon of perhaps fifty. And now the great excitement seemed to rest no longer upon the bride, but upon a large table at one end, under the Leonardo fresco, loaded down with food and resplendent with a wedding cake, in piled-up tiers of loveliness. The guests crowded about it, lost in admiration, having lived for weeks chiefly upon war-bread and macaroni. It seemed like a banquet — 'just like Sherry's!' some one exclaimed.

For here, spread out before them, was bouillon, jellied tongue, crêpe à la Newburg, chicken salad, real ice-cream piled upon mounds of ice, and champagne, to be served in pitchers.

I was so thankful that I had not troubled my friends in Rome, for the wedding cake was a gem of Sicilian culinary art, mound upon mound of piled-up frosting, spun sugar, tiny roses, and little statues, redolent of the 'festa,' a breath of the childish, simple life of the island. We could almost see it borne aloft at the head of the 'Pastorale' over the hills and far away.

During the luncheon, the two bands played alternately, the orchestra inside and the band with the white cockades out under the trees. Later the wedding party gathered in front of the great façade of the monastery and was immortalized in pictures; and later still, in every nook and corner of the old monastery and its grounds: upon the stairway hugging the side of the wall, in the cortile, in the

rose garden; and always the carabinieri — *and* the bandmaster — in the background: they knew their duty, and they never missed an occasion to honor the bride — in these photographs that were to be sent to America!

Then the bridesmaid took off the borrowed picture hat, returned it to the bride, who, being already dressed in her everyday clothes, which she had worn for weeks in her rambles about the island, put it on and was ready for her bridal tour.

And we, the little party of dear friends, left sitting upon the seat of the parapet with our backs to the sea, the romantic old doorway facing us, were conscious of the fact that we had just been through a ceremony that might easily have taken place in the sixteenth century, and could never have happened in any civilized land nearer home.

Married and happy ever afterward! A fitting end to these glimpses, these high-lights of the memories of a lifetime!

THE END

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